



Le Sueur River One Watershed One Plan POLICY COMMITTEE

Date: December 16, 2021

Meeting #7

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Freeborn County Government Center – Freeborn Room

Attending: *Policy Committee Members:* Don Kropp (Freeborn SWCD), Ted Herman (Freeborn Co.), Randy Feist (Faribault SWCD), De Malterer (Waseca Co.), Kevin Paap (Blue Earth Co.), Chris Hughes (Blue Earth SWCD), (Blue Earth SWCD), Larry Muff (Waseca SWCD), Tom Loveall (Faribault Co), Brad Krause (Waseca Co)

Staff/Other: Rachel Wehner (Freeborn Co.), Brenda Lageson (Freeborn SWCD), Mark Schaetzke (Waseca SWCD), Brandee Douglas (Faribault Co.), Haley Byron (Waseca Co), Jill Sackett Eberhart (BWSR)

Meeting called to order by De Malterer at 10:04 am, beginning with introductions.

Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda, made by Ted Herman, Seconded by Tom Loveall.

Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes, made by Ted Herman, Seconded by Kevin Paap.

Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

- Mark Schaetzke presented the financial report for expenses.
Motion to recommend Waseca SWCD to pay bills as presented, made by Larry Muff, Seconded by Randy Feist.
Motion passed unanimously.

Issue Statements

- Mark Schaetzke discussed the purpose of the issue statements and how they state the problems, risk, or opportunities for the watersheds priority resources. It also lays the foundation of the plan content. To date, ISG aggregated all data available – plans, reports, other county water plans, etc. From that 36 issues statements were developed. The steering committee completed a survey of importance and after meeting, narrowed results down to 15. Technical advisory committee reviewed issue statements and provided feedback and edits. Loveall requested more information of the players of each group and when the public was involved. It was explained that the public kickoff and survey results were pulled into results, steering committee factored in public interest, and there are a couple interested members of the public part of the technical advisory committee.
- Policy committee members requested to receive the extensive summary of kickoff summary.
- Also requested was the lists of who is on each committee. An effort should be made to bring in more people in agriculture to TAC meetings. They could be invited as needed. It was discussed that we ultimately can't force people to come. We can only do our due diligence to invite and try to get people to attend.
- Issue statements were discussed individually. Resource concerns weighted at the top of the list is water quality in rivers and streams, and water quality in lakes. Following those was Erosion with issue statements that address soil health, erosion in agricultural lands, and bluff, ravine, and bank erosion.
 - Question was posed the difference between high and excess. Water quality in rivers and streams lists high sediment and nutrients. Water quality in lakes lists excess sediment and nutrients. Requested that we ask ISG about the language differences. Can be compared or adjusted to WRAPS



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or TMDL language. When we set measurable goals, high vs excess will be defined. Staff will get further information on these two statements to clarify.

- One issue statement is overall negative to agriculture. Wordsmithing could possibly be done to replace “poor” in statements. Should we acknowledge we have problems without the negativity?
- Weighted ranking in erosion needs to be listed in order in the plan. Ranking value does not define any prioritization, just the method the steering committee used to create the issues.
- Kevin Paap proposed quantity (peak flows and annual flow volume) should be addressed ahead of quality. Quantity is affecting quality due to increased flows which causes erosion, and increased drainage.
- Wetlands were questioned how much of a focus this will be due to the cost of restorations. Those decisions have not been decided yet.
- Regarding leadership, the question was asked about who decision makers are. It was said anyone that makes decisions can fall under this and this was high ranking from the kickoff meeting and survey.
- “Lack of technical understanding” vs “an increase of engagement”. However issue statements are identifying problems and negative items. Goals and implementation are the positive spin.
- Paap brought up the issue statement not on the list that perhaps should be on the list under leadership is (pg 4) regarding “limited staff capacity and turnover limit progress”. Overall opinion was that it shouldn’t be listed as an issue statement but will be addressed in narrative how staff will complete work. Hardships in capacity can be mentioned.

Motion to approve broad issue statements with knowledge that certain wordage may change but intent will stay the same, made by Tom Loveall, seconded by Chris Hughes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Updates and Next Steps:

- Priority areas will be the next step for steering committee members along with questions brought up in this policy meeting. Measurable goals follow that.
- Next meeting is Jan 28th at 10am in Waseca.

Motion to adjourn by Tom Loveall, seconded by Randy Feist.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:11pm

Secretary – Commissioner Ted Herman

Submitted by: Rachel Wehner (Freeborn County)