



Le Sueur River One Watershed One Plan POLICY COMMITTEE

Date: October 22, 2021

Meeting #7

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Blue Earth County Government Center

Attending: *Policy Committee Members:* Don Kropp (Freeborn SWCD - virtual), Ted Herman (Freeborn Co.), Randy Feist (Faribault SWCD), De Malterer (Waseca Co.), Kevin Paap (Blue Earth Co.), Chris Hughes (Blue Earth SWCD), John Shanahan (Blue Earth SWCD),

Staff/Other: Haley Byron (Waseca Co.), Rachel Wehner (Freeborn Co.), Brenda Lageson (Freeborn SWCD), Scott Salisbury (Blue Earth Co.), Mark Schaetzke (Waseca SWCD), Brandee Douglas (Faribault Co.), Kimberly Musser (Water Resources Center MSU- Mankato), Tim Grant (Blue Earth Co), Julie Conrad (local resident).

Meeting opened by Kevin Papp and called to order by De Malterer at 10:02 am, beginning with introductions.

Agenda:

Two items added to agenda:

- Open meeting law presentation/discussion
- Change meeting dates for November and December.

Motion to approve the agenda with additions, made by Tom Loveall, Seconded by Chris Hughes.

Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes, made by Kevin Papp, Seconded by Randy Feist.

Motion passed unanimously.

Open Meeting Law

- Jill Sackett Eberhart presented information about open meeting laws. 2 statutes allow for virtual options.
 - Must include interactive technology including video. Must be able to see and hear everyone. Hybrid/virtual options available 3 times per year (unknown if that is per meeting or per person).
 - Meetings during pandemic or safety issues, can be by telephone/ virtual. Need to reference in notice with virtual option the need due to pandemic concerns.
- For today's meeting, the 1 virtual policy member will not be voting.
- Discussion was had about how to move forward. Allow for virtual options or require in person representation? While in person is better, do we want to allow the option to allow a virtual voting option? Intention is for voting members to be in person but allow virtual option. If 1 voting member is virtual, a roll call must be done for all.

Motion to allow hybrid/virtual option and notice appropriately made by Larry Muff, Seconded by Randy Feist.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to amend initial motion to utilize either statute as allowed, made by Ted Herman, seconded by Randy Feist.

Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

- Mark Schaetzke presented the financial report for expenses. It was requested that a 10% retainage column be added on future financial reports. The question was posed whether individual staff invoices should be included in financial report. General consensus is to continue as is but this may change in future.



Le Sueur River One Watershed One Plan POLICY COMMITTEE

Date: October 22, 2021

Meeting #7

Motion to recommend Waseca SWCD to pay bills as presented, made by Tom Loveall, Seconded by Ted Herman.

Motion passed unanimously.

Well Sealing Program:

- Scott Salsbury and Tim Grant presented on Blue Earth County's Well Sealing Program. The county is one of ten that have a delegated well program within the state. Current water plan prioritizes sealing abandoned wells. Location of these abandon wells are frequently found in Ag fields, landfills, treatment plants, feedlots, industrial/commercial/ residential areas, etc. Well depths range from 35 ft. to 2000 ft. It was noted that land use frequently changes causing wells to be forgotten. To date 3,298 wells have been sealed since 1989. All are permitted with 95% inspected during the sealing process. \$246,081 in cost share has been given by Blue Earth County. Cost share typically cover approximately 50% in most cases. Well sealing is prompted by new well construction, well disclosures, permit reviews. Unused or improperly sealed wells fall under the county's Environmental hazard abatement ordinance. Process of sealing a well: remove obstructions within casing, fill well with grout, and submit the paperwork.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):

- Haley Byron presented the list of possible members. State agencies have required members.

Motion to approve the TAC Committee as submitted, made by Randy Feist, Seconded by Kevin Papp.

Motion passed unanimously.

- Per the bylaws, a policy member is to be present for the TAC meetings. This can be a rotation or a delegated person.

Motion to for a policy committee member to attend TAC meetings on a rotational/volunteer basis made by Larry Muff, seconded by Tom Loveall.

Motion passed unanimously.

Kickoff Meeting and Citizen Survey:

- Kim Musser presented on the kickoff meeting and survey. It took place on September 16th at St Olaf Lake Park. The event was incredibly well attended. Interest of attendees had values of preserving the natural ecosystem, natural environment, and water quality. Concerns: flooding and increasing peak flows, water quality, land use, and management. Strategies: soil health practices, water storage. Online survey: 68 responded, mostly from Blue Earth and Waseca Counties. Value: groundwater was highest with lake water a close 2nd. Also covered were concerns with level of concern for each item and various strategies and the importance of each. Kim will be submitting a detailed and brief reports.

Updates and Next Steps:

- ISG submitted a memo of their status. At this point they are working on aggregating data and getting kick off data included. Next steps will be issue statements and prioritization.

Meeting schedule:



Le Sueur River One Watershed One Plan POLICY COMMITTEE

Date: October 22, 2021

Meeting #7

- Next meeting, due to the recurring meeting date taking place on the day after Thanksgiving, will be at 10:00 AM on December 3rd At the Freeborn County Courthouse, in the Freeborn Room. December meeting, due to the recurring meeting date falling on December 24th, will be canceled.

Motion to adjourn by Tom Lovell, seconded by Ted Herman.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:22 PM.

Secretary – Commissioner Ted Herman

Submitted by: Rachel Wehner (Freeborn County)