

# Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan

## Draft Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 20th 2022

**Attendees at meeting:** Holly Kalbus (Le Sueur County), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD), Barb Peichel (BWSR), Melissa King (BWSR), and Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD)

### Welcome & Review Agenda

- The Lower Minnesota River One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) meeting started at 10:00am on Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup> 2022. The meeting was held virtually. Holly briefly went over the agenda. The main goals of the meeting were to provide an update about the budget, workplan, timeline, and MOA, and also review a draft of the RFQ, and lastly to go through a discussion about bylaws. A policy committee meeting agenda wasn't developed based off of discussion with staff that were present.

### Recap Last Meeting

- Holly briefly went over discussion at our last meeting which was December 16, 2021. We went through updated drafts of the budget, timeline, and workplan. There was a brief update about the MOA. The steering team also went through a few different examples of an RFQ/RFP for consultants and discussed what we would like to see in this document. Later that day we had an informational policy committee meeting where board members were able to get to know one another, and we also went into detail about one watershed one plan.

### Update "Final Draft" Budget, Workplan, and Timeline

- Holly spoke with Melissa roughly a week prior to this meeting about the budget, workplan, and timeline documents that were submitted in late December 2021.
  - All of the documents were considered completed and approved.
    - The additional funds that were requested in our proposed budget, which is \$10,851, was also approved.
  - The partnership cannot move forward though until the MOA is executed and signed by all partners.
  - Currently about half of the planning grant proposals that were approved for this fiscal year, have submitted all of the required documentation and requested planning grant funds.

- Right now there is enough funding for the additional \$10,851 in our budget, but that could change at any moment
- Melissa did ask Julie Westerlund to give her a courtesy heads up if the funds are going to essentially run out where we will not be able to ask for those additional grant dollars.
  - If this does happen, we will need to resubmit a new budget.
- Barb mentioned that if we need to make an amendment to the budget we will have to be careful about allowable costs.
  - The hope is that we will be able to have the higher budget, but if there is not funds available, then we will need to make so cuts to our current proposed budget.
- The conversation about the budget, workplan, and timeline was relatively short, but lead to a good transition to the MOA Discussion.

### **MOA Discussion**

- Holly hasn't received an update from Vanessa about whether or not the MOA has been reviewed by the Scott County attorney.
  - The last update she received was a week or so ago, and the attorney was really close to reviewing the document.
  - Holly intends to reach out to Vanessa, both a phone call and email, to receive an update.
- If Scott County/WMO isn't able to provide an answer soon, there is an option to have them join later.
  - The MOA specifically states other partners can join up to 6 months after the grant agreement is executed.
    - The MOA would need to go back to each individual board if additional partners want to join.
      - Le Sueur County attorney was able to provide some guidance on this.
  - The partnership with Scott County and WMO is really important, but this may be the best way to move forward if we want those additional funds for planning efforts.
- The current memorandum of agreement does mention that Scott County/WMO is going to have the role of note taker.
  - Le Sueur SWCD stated they would take that role, if Scott County/WMO is unable at this time to sign the MOA.
    - Billable rates are similar enough that we can have some flexibility with this if Scott County/WMO would like that role after they execute the MOA.



- Mike made the comment that potentially we could have someone from the UMN extension office help out.
      - Barb stated that their contracts can be a bit tricky to deal with.
    - Barb stated that a watershed planning effort up north hired their TSA to help with facilitation.
    - Freshwater society also is an option.
  - The other amendments that were suggested with the roles was clarifying the advisory committee and who is currently interested and what entities would be on the policy committee.
- The number of meetings expected for the consultant was unknown. This information was listed in 1.5 Project Description.
  - Barb thought it would be a good idea to list some kind of number.
  - We want the consultant to attend all of the advisory committee meetings, all of the public kickoff meetings, and some policy committee meetings.
- The schedule mentioned in section 1.7 had some major deadlines listed.
  - Holly wasn't sure if there were additional deadlines we wanted to add?
  - Barb suggested have some deliverables associated with those deadlines.
    - Not a bad idea to have some expectations listed up front.
- Barb mentioned that in a few places we mentioned utilizing existing data, information, models.
  - It would be beneficial to clarify if we are intending on utilizing the existing data and models already created to prioritize, target, and measure our priority areas and goals. Or do we want to try to do something else during planning efforts?
    - We did not currently have in our budget any funds to assist with modeling.
    - Holly stated her preference would be to utilize the data we have now. Sometime at the 5-year amendment mark we could update numbers.
      - We would be able to utilize WBIF to do additional modeling where needed.
      - Steve mentioned that would be his preference.
- We also discussed RFQ submittal requirements.
  - We agreed on 20 pages, excluding appendices.
  - The table contents format/layout for each submittal.
  - Who would be the point of contact.

- Last meeting, we talked about requiring a sample of writing.
      - To eliminate clutter, we will request a detailed summary of the writing and a link to a website to view it.
    - Holly asked if we should post our responses to any questions from consultants on a website?
      - Barb and Melissa stated yes that would be helpful.
      - This would occur right after all responses have been completed by the partnership.
  - The suggested timeline for hiring a consultant was based off of where we currently are at with the planning process and how much time was suggested by BWSR in their template to complete each step of the RFQ process.
  - We talked about Appendix B.
    - Holly went through what information, studies, and reports she added that she thought were beneficial for the consultant.
      - According to our workplan and budget, staff were going to assist with this to help reduce costs.
      - There were a few items that needed clarification, some of the questions could not be answered due to staff not being present.
        - Holly would ask them via email.
      - Holly asked about wellhead protection plans and any groundwater reports on whether or not they should be included?
        - Melissa stated yes we should.
        - Barb mentioned that some watersheds were selected for the GRAPS process, but the Lower Minnesota River Watershed was not one of them.
          - Any information we have on groundwater would be useful.
  - Appendix E would need to be updated by Scott SWCD.
    - Holly had a general format and information to include. Essentially she just wanted a placeholder for now.

### **Bylaws-Template & Examples**

- Holly did not start on creating a draft bylaws yet. Rather, she had a template and a few examples of what others did.
  - She asked if she should do something similar to what we did with the RFQ and just create a rough draft that the steering team can comment on?

- Steve mentioned just cut and paste what you like, and then we can discuss as a group.
- Barb mentioned that we should highlight a few major items in the bylaws when we present to the policy committee would be good.
  - Something similar we did with the MOA.
  - Essentially anything that would need some discussion.
  - For example, super majority, secretary, committees, how and when we will disperse packet information, meeting location information, etc.
- We also talked about open meeting law and questioned whether we should soften the language a bit for flexibility to allow hybrid meetings.
  - Currently if a policy committee member wants to join virtually and vote, they have to provide their location, post they are at the meeting, and additional disclose their location 3 days before the meeting.
  - There was consensus from the group to allow policy committee members to join virtually.
    - Would need legal guidance on how to put this information in the bylaws and meet state requirements.
  - Flexibility with joining virtually or in person is really important due to the small number of policy committee members.
    - We want to make sure we have a quorum when there are items that need decisions.

## **Next Steps**

- Holly will follow up with Vanessa about the MOA.
  - Back up draft will be created in case Scott County/WMO are not able to participate at this time.
  - Holly will send out the final MOA on February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Edits from today's meeting will be made to the MOA.
- A rough draft of the bylaws will be created for the next steering team meeting for staff to review.
- A policy committee agenda will need to be created at the next steering team meeting.
  - Probably will move this meeting to March. There will won't be enough content for the policy committee otherwise.
    - In March, we will be further along with the planning grant process to start working on next steps.
- Any contracts and sub agreements drafts can start to be developed into a draft form.
  - Will incorporate changes that were discussed today.

- Also need to include justification on why budget is over what was originally proposed.
    - Will CC group when this information is sent.
  - Goal is to submit by December 31, 2021.
- Finalize drafts of MOAs and receive county attorney review.
  - Holly will contact Vanessa as soon as possible to see if Scott County attorney can review the updated MOA.
  - Would like to have all parties adopt the MOA no later than March 31, 2021.
  - Once Scott County attorney reviews, can send out drafts to other county attorneys for one final review.
  - Since board meetings vary by each entity, want to make sure there is enough time to get t on the agenda.
- The next steering team meeting is Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am to 1:30pm.
  - Meetings will soon switch over to Microsoft Teams. We may or may not have Microsoft Teams up and running by February.
    - More likely to have it ready to go for March.