

Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 7th 2022

Attendees at meeting: Holly Kalbus (Le Sueur County), Barb Peichel (BWSR), Melissa King (BWSR), Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD), Meghan Darley (Scott SWCD), and Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD)

Welcome & Review Agenda

- The Lower Minnesota River One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) meeting started at 10:00am on Thursday, April 7th 2022. The meeting was a hybrid; held virtually and in person. Holly briefly went over the agenda. The main goals of the meeting were to provide an update about board approvals of MOAs, review RFQ submissions and have discussion, develop an agenda for the April Policy Committee meeting, and continue discussions with the public notification and kick off meeting process.

Recap Last Meeting

- Holly briefly went over discussion at our last meeting which was March 03, 2022. We went through a quick update of timelines when each LGU would go to boards for approval of the MOA. The steering team also went through an updated draft of the RFQ for hiring consultants and discussed which consultants we would like to send the RFQ out to. The steering team also reviewed a bylaws draft. Lastly the steering team discussed what should be included on the March Policy Committee Agenda.

Update MOAs

- Most partners have gone to their boards for approval of the MOA.
 - Still need correspondence from Scott County and Scott WMO
- Melissa stated that once the MOA is complete we should email a copy to her.
 - After the MOA is approved, the steering team can start working on the Grant Agreement.

Review RFQ Submissions and Discuss

- Holly and Meghan stated that the partnership only received one proposal from ISG.
 - Other consulting firms were either not interested or did not have the staff capacity right now.
- No one was able to thoroughly read the proposal since it was just submitted less than a week ago.

- Some were able to skim through different sections.
- The steering team had discussion on how we were surprised that only one consulting firm submitted a proposal.
- There were a few different options on how the steering team could move forward. We could either go with ISG or reopen up the request for qualifications.
 - The steering team discussed how the preference would be to have a few proposals to review; however, not moving forward would delay planning efforts.
 - There was discussion if we even postponed it for a few months, we would still be stuck in the same situation.
 - Staff recommended having ISG still present at the Policy Committee, and then we can discuss as a group on how we want to move forward.
- We talked about which staff should present at the Policy Committee meeting. We would for sure like to have Bailey and Sarah present.
- The steering team dove into the proposal and looked through different sections.
 - Melissa mentioned that there were some activities mentioned within ISG's proposal that was being suggested to be completed by the consultant rather than the steering team (even though we had already discussed the steering team was going to complete those activities).
 - We talked about how this would be a part of the negotiation process.
 - Everyone at the meeting thought the visuals and overall format of the proposal was appealing and easy to read.
 - The steering team also mentioned that the amount of staff available to work on this plan is substantial. Which was a nice change of pace.
 - Additionally, the steering team thought it would be a good idea to reach out to references to see what their experiences were like working with ISG.
- We also started to come up with a list of questions to ask ISG.
 - One of the questions we discussed was asking about how they would develop a process or process(es) to prioritize resources and issues.
 - Another question was how ISG was going to use the WRAPS document to set measurable goals.
 - We also discussed how activities and funding streams will be diverse within this watershed due to partners being from the metro area and greater Minnesota.
 - How would ISG integrate all of these different partners and funding streams?
 - Melissa mentioned that the implementation schedule for all watersheds has been a really robust and difficult document to read.
 - Suggested asking how they would make that schedule more user friendly and easy for others to read.

- Looking for new ideas.
- Barb stated that within the 2 year workplan timeframe and throughout the 10 years we will have more activities than we have funding for. Just something to consider.
 - How are we going to show that in our plan, specifically, the implementation schedule?
- Barb also had a few additional questions and comments for the steering team to consider.
 - How are we going to track different implementation efforts?
 - Are we going to use a story map?
 - Talk about the whole team, and if someone from the consulting firm leaves. Who is going to cover that person's role?
 - Keeping on budget and time is difficult. How will they find that balance to do so?
- Holly stated that she will send out the proposal to all steering team and the policy committee to review soon.
 - The policy committee and staff will also be able to develop questions to ask the consultant. Additionally, Holly will type up a list of questions to ask based off of the ones that Barb has sent and what was discussed at the meeting.

Policy Committee Agenda April 21st

- The majority of the meeting will be revolved around the presentation by ISG.
- At this point, it is not worth doing any ranking because there is only one proposal. Rather we can develop a list of some set questions we would like to ask. If others have additional questions, they can also ask.
- There will be some quick updates about other items.
- Holly remembers at the March meeting that at least 3 board members would not be able to attend the Policy Committee meeting that is scheduled for May 19th. We may have to adjust/amend that meeting for a different day.
- There was some discussion about Bylaws. Holly hasn't had a ton of time to do additional revisions.
 - Since we don't have a complete MOA, we can't adopt any bylaws until the MOA is complete and approved.

Public Notification & Kick Off Meetings

- The steering team would still like to host 2-3 meetings

- One will be an all virtual option which will be held during the day
- The in person meetings will be held during a week night
- Due to a bit of a delay, the meetings probably will occur in June and/or July
- The public kick off meeting probably won't last more than a few hours
- Barb mentioned the format for these meetings have been done differently with watersheds
 - Open house where people can walk around at their own pace
 - Provide a presentation about the purpose of the meeting and then have different tables where attendees can ask questions.
 - Steve recommended if we do a presentation to keep it short and sweet
 - Have online surveys available-prioritization and targeting

Next Steps

- Check in with Scott County & WMO to see where they are at with the MOA.
 - Otherwise would still be able to get a reviewed MOA to everyone's board meeting in April if need be.
- The steering team should review the proposal submitted by ISG.
- Holly will work on developing some questions to ask ISG at the policy committee meeting.
 - These will be typed up.
- Next Steering Team Meeting: **Thursday, May 5th from 10:00am-1:30pm**
 - Will be a hybrid meeting. Meeting location will be at the Scott SWCD office, 7151 190th St W #125, Jordan, MN 55352.
- Next Policy Committee Meeting: **Thursday, April 21st from 3:00pm-5:00pm**
 - Holly will send out all policy committee meeting materials by Tuesday April 12th at the very latest.
 - This meeting will be in person.