

Lower Minnesota River East 1W1P

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Date & Time: 3:00-5:00pm, Thursday, April 21st, 2022

Location:

Le Sueur County Soil and Water Conservation District Office
181 W Minnesota Street, Le Center, MN 56057

Attendees: Melissa King, BWSR; Holly Kalbus, Le Sueur County; Mike Schultz, Le Sueur SWCD; Greg Entinger, Le Sueur SWCD; Laura Amundson, LMRWD; Julie Blackburn, ISG; Bailey Griffin, ISG; Sarah Boser, ISG; Danny O'Keefe, Le Sueur County; Steve Pahs, Rice SWCD; Jeff Docken, Rice County; Meghan Darley, Scott SWCD; Doug Schnoecker, Scott SWCD; Rita Weaver, Scott County/SWMO; Melissa Bokman Ermer, Scott WMO

Welcome & Review Agenda

Chair Danny O'Keefe called the meeting to order at 3:01pm, he asked everyone to review the agenda and asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by Greg Entinger, seconded by Rita Weaver to approve the April 21st, 2022 agenda.

Approval of March 17th 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Laura Amundson, seconded by Greg Entinger to approve the March 17th meeting minutes.

Update Planning Grant and Grant Agreement – Holly provided an update on Memorandum of Agreements, all signatures have been obtained from all organizations. The Scott SWCD is working on editing the workplan, the Scott SWCD board executed the grant agreement at today's board meeting. BWSR has received and accepted all required documents. The bylaws are next to finalize. Melissa King stated that once workplan has been approved takes a couple of weeks for payment from BWSR, funds will likely be available in May.

Introductions were given by all in-person, Policy Committee members absent were Virgil Pint and Richard Cook.

Consultant Presentation(s)

ISG staff introduced themselves: Julie Blackburn, Bailey Griffin and Sarah Boser

ISG gave a presentation on their proposal they have worked with other organizations and created six One Watershed One Plans to date. Some key points on how they work with organizations on a plan development is they come to meetings with draft of write-up (content development) so meetings will be more effective with partners reacting to written information (reflecting and refining). They use Jamboard for public interaction which has been effective for those individuals who don't like to speak up. They create a plan that is graphically rich, user friendly, plain language that anyone can understand.

ISG would work through the modeling and report out the results, not the TAC. Laura asked "what is the biggest issue we need to be aware of?" ISG responded with "working as a group and team and coming to a consensus as a group." A follow-up question was asked, "as far as schedule, is there a critical time?" ISG responded with "getting started".

A question was asked on whether ISG has encountered differences in how much detail should go into the implementation plan with other groups and how they handled that. ISG responded that they encourage being flexible in the implementation plan rather than being too detailed with implementation actions, also encourage developing criteria for how a changes can happen when an action is more broad.

Policy Committee and Steering Team Consultant Discussion

The committee started discussion of ISG and how the group feels about them being the only proposal received. Holly indicated she did receive responses from a couple of consultants that indicated they didn't have time or capacity to submit a proposal.

Lauren indicated she had concerns that ISG was the only proposal. Holly responded that she checked references: The responses she received were good, ISG did a really good job, overall reference comments were good. Holly indicated that one advantage they have is a lot of staff. Laura added that their plan graphics are great and looked really good.

Rita indicated her only reservation is their technical work in the past, but there isn't a lot of technical work going into the plan. Jeff Docken indicated he is comfortable choosing ISG.

There was a motion by Doug Schoenecker to accept this firm on the plan development, seconded by Jeff Docken.

This is contingent on a budget and approved contract. If they are over our budget and we can't negotiate, staff can take on some tasks of the plan such as taking it through the review phase or writing some inventory language.

Other Updates

Timeline

Holly gave an update on the plan timeline, indicating it will change a little bit.

Spring 2022: Items completed - Adopt MOA locally, grant agreement execution, election of officers; items to be completed yet this spring: upload final workplan documents to eLink, aggregate watershed information, notify plan review authorities, hire consultants, finish bylaws, and establish Advisory Committee. Items to be completed in Summer 2022: plan and carry out public meetings (this timeline may get pushed back a bit), write land & water resources narrative, identify and prioritize resources and issues, and establish measurable goals.

Holly would like to talk further about advisory committee at the May meeting.

- Bylaws Draft – Holly received comments from Linda, and sent to Le Sueur county attorney. The bylaws language – MOA language isn't matching with the bylaws language for Scott Co and Scott WMO. Melissa King indicated this should be resolved as soon as possible.
- Stakeholder List – Holly will to send a link to the group to add people or groups to the list
- There is a federal program, RCPP, in the works within Minnesota. The focus is more towards water storage and drainage. Rita W. stated this program is in the very earlier stages. The goal is to pick a few major watersheds to focus on.

Wrap Up/Next Steps

- Next Policy Committee Meeting: **Thursday, May 19th from 3:00pm-5:00pm** – The group discussed whether May 19th would work for everyone Chair O'Keefe stated to just plan for May 26th for the next meeting. Group agreed to have a hybrid option for the meeting. Group agreed to do meetings at Le Sueur SWCD going forward to avoid conflicts with rooms.
- Bylaws - Laura and Linda are not available in May, can we approve the bylaws virtually? Talk to our county attorneys for the answer to that question.
- List of Stakeholders and Meeting Locations
- Advisory Committee(s) – Holly indicated we need to develop a TAC, a question was posed if would it work better to develop

subcommittees/groups to bring in at certain times for relevant information, input and what people are interest in.

Chair O'Keefe asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motioned by Jeff Docken, seconded by Doug Schoenecker at 4:28pm.