

Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan

Draft Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 3rd 2022

Attendees at meeting: Holly Kalbus (Le Sueur County), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD), Barb Peichel (BWSR), Melissa King (BWSR), Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD), Meghan Darley (Scott SWCD), Brad Behrens (Rice County), Vanessa Strong (Scott County/Scott WMO), and Linda Loomis (Lower MN River WD)

Welcome & Review Agenda

- The Lower Minnesota River One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) meeting started at 10:00am on Thursday, March 3rd 2022. The meeting was held virtually. Mike briefly went over the agenda. The main goals of the meeting were to provide an update about board approvals of MOAs, discuss which subagreement template we will use, final review of the RFQ draft and discuss next steps, begin discussion of the public kickoff meetings, and review an updated draft of the bylaws.

Recap Last Meeting

- Mike briefly went over discussion at our last meeting which was February 11, 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 Rice County, Scott County and Scott WMO
 - The MOA will go to Scott County's board on March 15th. Vanessa doesn't anticipate any issues with the Scott County board approving the MOA. Pending final review by the County Attorney.
- Melissa provided an updated that there are 3 months left for the deadline to request funds.
 - Approximately half of the funds are left with 7 out of the 11 planning areas approved for planning grant funds.

Subagreements Update and Discussion

- At the last Scott SWCD board meeting, Meghan presented two different examples of subagreements.
 - One example was a template subagreement that Scott SWCD uses for their projects and programs.
 - The other example is a BWSR template for watershed planning efforts.
 - The SWCD board decided to use BWSR's subagreement template.
- Want to use a subagreement template that is the same for everyone.
 - Consistency among partners.
 - Scott SWCD will send them out for each LGU that will have a specific role with watershed planning efforts.
 - Vanessa stated that the Scott WMO needs a 90-day window to review the subagreement.
 - Meghan will work on getting Scott WMO's subagreement out right away so it can get in line to be reviewed the County attorney.

Introduction Public Kickoff Meetings

- Holly had mentioned that the steering team had brief conversations about the public kickoff meetings awhile back. Since we are approaching those meetings, Holly thought it would be worthwhile to have a deeper conversation.
- Steven mentioned that in the Cannon there was a public notice and they invited conservation based organizations.
- Barb stated that we can do the public notification and kick off meetings any time
 - She can send the us a list of who must be notified.
- Melissa state that the early public notice is very simple. Create a list of LGUs, lake associations, nonprofits, etc. that we think would like to be notified.
- Vanessa suggested creating a shared folder in google docs/drive that would have one list of who to send notifications to.
 - This way we prevent having duplicates on who to contact.
- We discussed awhile back having at least 2-3 public kickoff meetings.
 - Have at least one meeting virtual.
 - We can require individuals to sign up in advance. Then if no one signs up, we won't hold a meeting. Probably have this meeting during the workday (agency staff, LGUs, etc.) probably would prefer this option.
 - Have 1-2 meetings in person.
 - Try to have in a few locations throughout the watershed.

- At first the steering team suggested hosting these meetings at government buildings, but then the conversation shifted to hosting the meetings in different locations.
 - Examples include: Cedar Lake Park, Ney Nature Center, Richter Woods, Vineyard.
- We discussed hosting the meetings sometime in May or June.
- Barb suggested making sure we keep the Policy Committee involved with this.

Review Final Draft of RFQ & Discussion Next Steps

- The RFQ is ready for final review and comments before sending out to consultants.
- There were a few edits that were made to the RFQ since the last meetings.
 - No paper copies, only electronic.
 - Introduction page could be up to 2 pages.
 - Holly did add deliverables for the major deadlines. These deliverables were based off of the workplan.
 - Meghan suggested removing the deliverables from the RFQ and adding them into the contract with the consultant.
 - The steering thought this was a good idea. It will hold the consultant a little more accountable.
- At the last meeting we created a list of consultants to send out the RFQ to, Holly want to double check that there weren't any additional consultants to add or remove from the list?
 - There were no additional amendments.
- The steering team discussed the requirements of making the RFQ publically available?
 - Meghan thought she just had to post it on the website.
- Additionally, the steering team discussed whether or not we want to rank and score the RFQ applications that are sent in?
 - It depends on how many applications we get.
 - Additionally, Vanessa stated the RFQ is a bit different than an RFP.
 - Generally, RFQs are not scored.
 - We don't necessarily need to score the consultant; we could also just ask a series of questions that are related to planning efforts.
 - Mike stated that in the past we have sat down as a steering team talked through the proposals, and then selected candidates, and then ranked and scored afterwards.
- Holly will make final amendments to the RFQ then set up a google drive folder for the group to review. Final comments are due no later at noon on Monday, March 7th in order for Holly to send out the RFQ to the list of consultants.

Updated Draft Bylaws

- Holly mentioned that at the February meeting we reviewed a rough draft of the Bylaws. A few amendments that were suggested was to amend or add some of the officer roles and to add language into the bylaws about allowing the option for policy committee members to join the meeting virtually and vote.
- The steering team first reviewed the officers' roles.
 - The secretary did have some amendments to the role since staff will be taking meeting notes. The secretary would fill in to run the meeting if the chair or vice chair were absent. This individual would also verify meeting minutes.
 - The treasurer role was also added. The responsibilities for the treasurer would be to receive budget and financial updates from the fiscal agent as well as communicate with other policy committee members about financial records.
 - Meghan suggested that it would be a lot of work for Scott SWCD to coordinate with this specific officer role.
 - The steering team agreed to remove the treasurer role.
- The other item that was reviewed by the steering team within the bylaws, was the section about meetings. There was discussion at the last steering team meeting to allow flexibility for policy committee members to join virtually or in person. Staff were also asked how each LGU interprets open meeting law requirements.
 - Vanessa stated that Scott County's policy is allowing in person or virtual attendance at meetings for quite some time.
 - The steering team discussed just having all LGUs follow their own agency's requirements.
 - This will be added language to the bylaws. Barb suggested adding language about each policy committee member may be able to participate virtually or in person depending on their local policy/agency guidelines.
 - Right now each LGU can attend meetings in person or virtually, but that could change as time goes on.
 - Vanessa suggested that we ask Policy Committee members ahead of time if they planning on attending the meeting in person or virtually, that way we are prepared for the meeting.
 - Barb suggested adding language about alternate policy committee members. If the primary policy committee member is absent, the alternate may vote in their place.
 - There was additional discussion about what are the current requirements for open meeting law.

- Meghan suggested referencing the current policies of an organization when it comes to attending meetings virtually. Each individual LGU will be required to follow their own policies and regulations.
- Barb suggested emphasizing to the policy committee that this is just a draft of the bylaws, and the steering team is looking for feedback at this time, not a motion.

Next Steps

- The steering team just has a few signature pages left before sending BWSR.
- Steering team provide comments and feedback for final draft RFQ no later than Monday, March 7th at noon.
 - The final draft of the RFQ will be sent in on the same day.
- Google account will be created for the watershed
 - Share documents this way.
 - Folder for the RFQ and Consultants
 - Folder for Public Kickoff Meetings (running list of stakeholders)
 - Folder for Subagreements
- Bylaws
 - Holly will update draft of bylaws before sending out to the Policy committee
 - Just a few comments received today; therefore, should be pretty easy to update
- Next Steering Team Meeting: **Thursday, April 7th 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.
 - Continue to have hybrid meetings for now.
- Next Policy Committee Meeting: **Thursday, March 17th from 3:00-5:00pm**
 - Holly will send out all policy committee meeting materials by Monday, March 7th