

Lower Minnesota River East 1W1P

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Date & Time: 3:00-5:00pm, Thursday, November 17, 2022

Location:

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

And

Virtual – Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Holly Bushman (Le Sueur County); Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD); Greg Entinger (Le Sueur SWCD); Laura Amundson (LMRWD); Bailey Griffin (ISG); Danny O’Keefe (Le Sueur County) (chair); Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD); Jeff Docken (Rice County); Meghan Darley (Scott SWCD); Doug Schoenecker (Scott SWCD); Virgil Pint (Scott County/SWMO); Melissa Bokman Ermer (Scott WMO); Linda Loomis (Lower MN River Watershed District)

I. Welcome & Review Agenda - Policy Committee Chair

Chair O’Keefe called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. Holly stated she did update the agenda with a memo and budget.

Motioned by Docken; Seconded by Schoenecker to approve the agenda as amended.

The Motion carried unanimously for the agenda to be approved as amended.

II. Review & Approval of August 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes – Policy Committee Chair

Chair O’Keefe asked for approval of the August 18th Policy Committee meeting minutes.

Motioned by Schoenecker; Seconded by Docken to approve the August 18, 2022, meeting minutes.

The Motion carried unanimously for the Meeting Minutes to be approved as written.

III. Priority Issue Statements (Decision Item) - ISG

Bailey Griffin from ISG presented the priority issues which were updated after the October 14th Advisory Committee meeting and discussion. She presented on what is an issue statement, how the issue statement fits into the plan, and the six priority issue statements in final draft. Six issue areas were identified as priorities for the planning areas. These include: Surface water –

Hydrology; Surface water – Quality; Groundwater – Quality; Groundwater – Quantity; Habitat and Natural Resources – Protection and Preservation; Habitat and Natural Resources – Restoration. Natural features on the landscape can be grouped into categories for management activities. Bailey described the process of leading up to how we came up with our priority issues presented today.

Next steps – the Advisory Committee will work on identifying priority resources, targeting, and establishing measurable goals. Bailey showed examples of goals and what a measurable goal statement would look like to the Policy Committee.

Holly discussed that the issue statements are in final draft, during yesterday's Steering Team meeting the issue statements were updated. Climate change was left out of issue statements and will be addressed as a separate paragraph to describe how that may affect the issues.

Holly indicated we are looking for a board action today to confirm these are our draft issue statements. The Board indicated they can leave room for revisions if needed, and to accept final draft issue statements as presented in memo and ISG.

Motioned by Schoenecker; Seconded by Docken to approve the priority issue statements.

The Motion carried unanimously for the approval of the issue statements

IV. Land & Water Resources Narrative (Decision Item) - ISG

Review and Discussion

Bailey Griffin presented a high-level overview on the Land & Water Resources Narrative (LWRN) chapter. The LWRN will be the second chapter to the Plan, it includes a detailed description of the physical landscape and resources, and socio-economic characteristics. Bailey went over plan content requirements to be included in the Narrative section and presented maps included in that section. There will be an opportunity for another review when the full plan is ready for public comment.

Motioned by Entinger; Seconded by Docken to approve the Land & Water Resources Narrative as written.

The Motion carried unanimously for the approval of the Land & Water Resources Narrative as presented

V. Advisory Committee Updates – Le Sueur County

Holly gave an update on the Advisory Committee progress. The Advisory Committee membership is finalized and has met twice (Sept. & Oct.). Items the Committee has accomplished to date:

- Set expectations as a group and how we will work with one another.
- Created a vision statement.
- October – reviewed and provided comments to the Land & Water Resources Narrative.
- Finished draft issue statements. November - work on finishing priority issue statements through survey input and started to work on Priority Resources.

If the Policy Committee would like to attend an Advisory Committee to hear the discussion you are welcome. Holly will send out invites to the Advisory Committee Meetings for the Policy Committee.

VI. Budget Update – Scott SWCD

Meghan presented an update on the Planning Grant budget. We were awarded \$235,851 from the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR). Contingency funds (\$8,655) were moved to the Plan Development budget. The contract is a deliverable-based contract. Billing and invoicing are occurring quarterly. We've expended \$25,565.57 to date, with a remaining balance of \$210,285.43. We will continue to do quarterly updates at the Policy Committee meeting.

VII. Planning Effort Timeline & Policy Committee Meeting Schedule - Le Sueur County

Holly – gave an update on the planning timeline – we are probably 1-2 months behind but will likely catch up soon, the extra time spent now will pay off as we continue with each step. There is flexibility if we need an extension, but we aren't concerned yet. Winter plan tasks include, prioritize issues and priority resources; establish measurable goals; develop a targeted implementation schedule. These next few steps will be time consuming as they are the main parts of the plan. Determine Plan Admin and Coordination is going to be introduced at the next Policy Committee Meeting. This is where the Policy Committee on the partnership wants to move forward and work together. Some examples include MOA or JPA. There are pros and cons to different agreements amongst the partnership, and we still start to go through those.

The Policy Committee should think about how you want to work together as we move forward after the Plan is in place into the future for planning efforts. (through a Joint Powers agreement, Joint Powers boards, etc.)

Schoenecker inquired, *"Is the budget just for the Plan or will we receive other funding for projects?"*

Holly responded, the budget is just for the Plan, we will receive Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) in the future once the Plan is adopted.

Updates & Next Steps – Le Sueur County

- Continue conversations with issue statements
- Introduce concepts of organizational arrangement
- Officer election 2023
- Continue with meeting every other month – 3rd Thursday.
- Cancel December meeting and meet Jan. 19th for Policy

Next Steering Team Meeting: **Wednesday, December 21st 1:30pm-3:00pm**

Next Policy Committee Meeting: **Thursday, January 19th 3:00pm-5:00pm**

Advisory Committee Meeting: **Wednesday, December 21st 10:00am-1:00pm**

Motion by Schoenecker; Seconded by Entinger to adjourn the meeting at 4:03pm

The Motion carried unanimously to adjourn