

## COTTONWOOD-MIDDLE MINNESOTA ONE WATERSHED, ONE PLAN (1W1P)

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 17, 2024 – 2:00 PM

Springfield Community Center – Springfield, MN

*\*joined virtually*



### Committee Members Present:

Larry Anderson – Area II, Jeff Veerkamp – Brown County, Mark Wellner - Brown SWCD, Tom Appel - Cottonwood County, Daryl Tasler – Cottonwood SWCD, Rick Anderson - Lyon County, John Lanoue – Lyon SWCD, Lori Gunnink\* -- Murray County, Mona Henkels\* – Murray SWCD, Rick Wakefield – Redwood County, Ed Carter – Redwood SWCD, Ed Carter\* – Redwood SWCD, Bill Eckstein - RCRCA, and John Ryan - City of Springfield.

### Steering Team Present:

Allison Kletscher - Brown County, Melanie Krueger - Brown SWCD, Kay Gross – Cottonwood SWCD, and Kerry Netzke - RCRCA/Area II.

Others Present: Rachel Olm, Houston Engineering Inc., and Tim Kraskey – citizen/PF member.

Chairman Anderson welcomed everyone and asked for introductions to be made.

The agenda, October 18, 2023 meeting minutes, and financial report through December 31, 2023 were provided. Expenses included \$14,756.35 for admin/meetings, and \$64,474.50 for consultant services; total grant expenditure to date of \$79,230.85. Motion by Wakefield, seconded by Eckstein, to approve the agenda, minutes and financial report as presented. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### Overview of Advisory Committee (AC)

Olm recapped this first meeting of the AC and Steering Team (ST) held on November 15, 2023. Minutes from that meeting were provided. The 4-hour meeting was very productive as Olm covered the Plan process in a similar fashion to the Kickoff meetings. A recap of the accomplishments made to date was covered including the identification and prioritization of issues and resources, and the Land and Water Resources Narrative. A few members pointed out some language within the narrative that casts a negative spin towards agriculture and livestock. Rewording was requested and was agreed to by consensus. An interactive activity was conducted to post the 'heat maps' and welcome changes to the maps, the language, the draft goals, and pertinent action items. A member of the ST attended each of these maps to facilitate discussion. Olm was pleased with the feedback from this group.

The AC will be asked to review the Measurable Goals and related Action Tables in March/April.

### Update on Measurable Goals and Subwatershed Prioritization

Measurable Goals is the 4<sup>th</sup> section of the Plan. Olm reviewed the BWSR Content Requirements for this section which must include 10-year and future condition goals. The Steering Team has asked that the goals be simple, easily reportable, and lean on existing goals from the WRAPS. To aid in developing measurable goals, a set of priority issue 'heat maps' were developed and edited by the Steering Team using professional judgment to reveal the subwatersheds where implementation actions should be focused. With this information, Houston Engineering used PTMApp to calculate the existing loads, and applied a reduction percentage to calculate the reduction in terms of tons/year or lbs/year. From those results, the Advisory Committee (which includes the Steering Team) can apply professional judgment to decide whether that goal is achievable or if an adjustment is necessary.

The draft format of the Measurable Goals section was shared, being in factsheet format. Each goal has a 2-page layout with information easily attained in the vertical column.

A Goals Summary handout was provided by Olm. The Steering Team provided great guidance today to identify the 10-year goals for the 8 outlined goals. The PC asked some good questions:

- 1) *Can stormwater be combined with water storage goals?* Stormwater is separate as it deals with water quality more than water quantity.
- 2) *Can testing be done to identify bacteria stemming from humans vs. animals?* MVTL laboratories do not do this testing as quality control is difficult. MPCA does do "source assessments" but it is costly, and the source is hard to unravel.

#### Action Tables Activity

The Action/Implementation Tables are used to target implementation efforts by Planning Region or watershed wide. An Activity was conducted where the PC roamed the room to review the tables to identify missing actions/activities, redline language, and determine if outputs and costs are realistic. The tables identify the action, location, lead role/agencies, cost, when the action will take place (ex. FY24-FY25), outcome, and how to measure results.

#### Introduction to Implementation Programs

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> Section of the Plan which addresses the funding mechanisms to implement actions that will include: capital improvements, research & monitoring, Admin & Tech Assistance, Projects & Practices, Education & Outreach, Regulatory, and Operations & Maintenance.

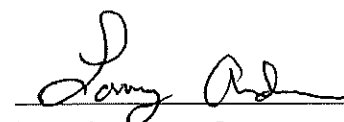
#### Formal Agreements

After the Plan is written, approved by BWSR, and adopted by all the parties, implementation of the Plan will begin. How the Plan will be administered must be covered by a formal agreement. The two options are: Joint Powers Collaboration (JPC) and Joint Powers Entity (JPE). The biggest difference between the two options is that the entity is covered by MCIT for liability, whereas the collaboration is not. Should there be a problem with a project/practice and the landowner would file a lawsuit, that lawsuit would be directed at the JPE. In the case of a JPC, each member of the JPC could be named in the lawsuit. MCIT has a presentation that has been prepared; BWSR staff could not attend today due to a training meeting, however they have documents and are willing to discuss formal agreements at the March meeting. Consensus of the committee was to forego the MCIT presentation at this time, plan for BWSR staff to present in March, and to request a statewide list/map of existing JPCs/JPEs within Minnesota. Olm will send out this information well in advance of the March meeting.

#### Action Items and Next Meeting

No Policy Committee meeting will be held in February; the Steering Team will meet virtually only. The next meeting for the Policy Committee will be Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 2:00 PM at the Springfield Community Center. This meeting will be hybrid with a virtual TEAMS connection.

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.



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Larry Anderson, Secretary  
Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota Partnership