

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

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 16, 2023 – 2:00 PM

Springfield Community Center – Springfield, MN

Committee Members Present:

Jeff Veerkamp – Brown County, Brad Augustine - Brown SWCD, Tom Appel - Cottonwood County, Rick Anderson - Lyon County, John Lanoue - Lyon SWCD, Lori Gunnink - Murray County, Rick Wakefield – Redwood County, Ed Carter – Redwood SWCD, Bill Eckstein - RCRCA, and Nick Klitsch - City of Springfield.

Steering Team Present:

Kay Gross – Cottonwood SWCD, Melanie Krueger - Brown SWCD, Kerry Netzke - RCRCA/Area II, and Mark Hiles and John Shea - BWSR.

Others Present: Rachel Olm and Chris Otterness, Houston Engineering Inc.

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

The agenda was adopted as presented. The Minutes from the July 19, 2023 Policy Committee meeting were provided. The financial report through August 16, 2023 was presented: expenses included \$1,135.08 for administration; total grant expenditures to date of \$18,559.81. Motion by Eckstein, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the minutes and financial report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Drainage and Storage Considerations in Water Planning

Chris Otterness from Houston Engineering presented this topic to cover what can and cannot be done with WBIF in relation to drainage and storage projects. He feels there are lots of opportunities for conservation to be included in drainage projects, however proactive efforts are better than reactive measures. Identify BMP locations prior to petitions being filed. BMPs are incorporated into nearly all public drainage systems which is highly impactful, but complex to develop. Mark Hiles added that Clean Water Funds cannot be used to establish an adequate outlet; that must exist first. In relation to drainage, 1W1P can: identify the need for drainage and conservation to work together; prioritize needs and identify opportunities; identify a suite of solutions; and set goals for practice implementation. 1W1P cannot: create opportunities for outside funding of system maintenance; introduce regulation; or establish new policies or goals for individual systems.

Incorporating storage into drainage systems can be complex as there is a need for public/private partnerships. Not all storage is created equal -- location and timing are huge factors. In relation to storage, 1W1P can: prioritize locations needed for altered hydrology; identify storage volume goals; and identify needs for additional research and planning. 1W1P cannot: provide a comprehensive list of potential locations; or details the feasibility or effectiveness of a project.

Logo

HEI revised the logo based on prior comments (at right). Another version was provided for the meeting with the water feature running horizontally. Discussion followed. The following suggestions were made: only 2 ears of corn on the stalk, smaller cornstalk, and more narrow water feature. Motion by Klitsch, seconded by Appel, to approve the logo with these changes. Motion carried unanimously.



Advisory Committee

A list of potential members to be appointed to the Advisory Committee is still needed. Netzke provided a listing of names suggested to date, and possible organizations that individuals may represent. The first meeting is slated for early November, so this list needs to be completed by September for Netzke to contact the members and secure their interest. Since the last meeting, Dr. Jeff Strock from the U of M Research Station at Lamberton has been added. A correction was made to assign Rosemary Bruce-White to MNDOT instead of SW Regional Development as she has recently taken that position. Kim Murphy is her replacement. All members are asked to provide names/contact information to Netzke via email before the September meeting.

Land and Water Resources Narrative (LWRN)

The LWRN, the 2nd section of the Plan, was revised based on comments from the PC in July. The committee pointed out a few areas where additional information is desired. Motion by Lori, seconded by Anderson, to accept the LWRN as a working draft section of the report. Additional changes can still be made later. Motion carried unanimously.

Plan Priority Issues

Olm covered the grouping of issues and their respective high-medium-low ranking pertaining to the Groundwater, Surface Water, Excess Water and Lands resources. A **High** ranking means that it is an important issue which will be the focus of implementation and WBIF. A **Medium** ranking means the issue is still important, will have measurable goals and actions developed, but may involve outside partners or funding. **Low** rankings will not be a focus of the Plan with no goals or actions developed but may be accomplished by higher ranked issues or by others.

Discussion followed involving Climate and its Medium priority ranking. It was felt that there is little we can do to combat climate change, however leaving the ranking as is could enable a partner who is applying for grant funding to reference the Plan. Motion by Klitsch, seconded by Gunnink, to approve the Priority Plan Issues as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Introduction to Resource and Subwatershed Prioritization

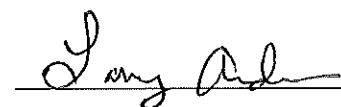
Olm presented the 5 planning regions for the Plan and scale examples of HUC-10 versus HUC-12 level subwatersheds. The HUC-10 level oversimplifies the issue as compared to the HUC-12 which was recommended by the Steering Team. DNR also uses the HUC-12 scale for their purposes. The Policy Committee selected the HUC-12 subwatershed scale.

Action Items and Next Meeting

The next meeting for the Policy Committee will be Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 2:00 PM at the Springfield Community Center. This meeting will be hybrid with a virtual TEAMS connection.

Homework: Compile Advisory Committee nominees

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 3:21 PM.



Secretary

Cottonwood-Middle Minnesota Partnership