



Big Fork River Watershed, 1W1P Policy Committee

Meeting Minutes for Jun 11th, 2025

Members in attendance

Policy Committee Members	Other Attendees
George Aitchison- Koochiching SWCD Veronica Bistodeau- City of Big Falls Ricky Roche- Koochiching County Cal Saari- Itasca SWCD	Andy Arens- Itasca SWCD Matt Gutzmann- Itasca SWCD Jeff Hrubes- BWSR Chad Severts- BWSR Austin Steere- Itasca SWCD Pam Tomevi- Koochiching SWCD

Members absent: Terry Snyder- Itasca County

- Welcome & introduction:** Gutzmann welcomed the attendees to the first policy committee meeting for the Big Fork River Watershed, One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) planning process. Brief introductions were shared by each attendee.
- 1W1P Overview & Orientation:** Gutzmann presented on the 1W1P planning process, timeline, and budget including overall planning budget of \$247,000 including 10% contingency. Gutzmann gave overview of committee roles for steering, advisory, and policy committees including a public kickoff meeting on July 23rd and the topic advisory committee meetings starting with Lakes & Streams on August 6th with recurring advisory meetings every first Wednesday of each month.
- Policy Committee Bylaws:** Gutzmann presented the policy committee bylaws, explaining that this is the guiding document for how the policy committee will operate. A motion by Saari, second by Aitchison to approve the policy committee bylaws as written. Affirmative, All. Motion carried.

Following member discussion, election of policy committee chairperson and vice chairperson per bylaws; Motion by Roche, second by Aitchison to elect Saari as policy committee chairperson. Affirmative, All. Motion carried.

Further discussion for election of vice chairperson. Motion by Roche, second by Saari to elect Aitchison as vice chairperson to the policy committee. Affirmative, All. Motion carried.

- Notification Process:** Gutzmann discussed details about the notification process including the required 60-day comment period for state agencies. Gutzmann also shared the tentative list of Technical Advisory Committee members which include state

agency staff and others with technical understanding of the watershed that have agreed to increased involvement in the planning process. Gutzmann shared draft notification letter to be released in local newspaper outlets notifying public of start of planning process for the watershed. Motion by Roche, second by Saari to approve technical advisory committee member list as working draft to the member list and open to additional members as appropriate. Affirmative, All. Motion Carried.

Additional motion by Roche, second by Bistodeau to approve the notification letter and begin the 60-day comment period for state agencies. Affirmative, All. Motion Carried.

- **Plan Writing Consultant:** Gutzmann presented proposed contract agreement from Houston Engineering Inc (HEI) to hire through the planning grant as the planning facilitator and plan writer for this planning process. Total proposed contract for \$135,000 includes list of deliverables to gather data, facilitate planning meetings, develop draft plan, and final plan review. Motion by Aitchison, second by Roche to approve proposed contract and hire HEI as consultant for planning process. Affirmative, All. Motion carried.
- **Wrap up:** The members discussed future policy committee meeting dates, group discussed generally the last Wednesday of each month at 10:30 generally works well to schedule meetings. Tentatively scheduled the next meeting for Wednesday, Aug 27.
- **Adjournment:** Motion by Roche, second by Aitchison to adjourn meeting at 11:35am.