



UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER – GRAND RAPIDS 1W1P

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES March 28th, 2024

Attendance:

Voting Members

Tom Fasteland, Aitkin Co.
SWCD

Barb Dahl, Carlton SWCD

Dave Peterson, Cass
SWCD

Gary Peterson, Carlton
County

Cal Saari, Itasca SWCD

Perry Bunting, Mille Lacs
Band of Ojibwe
(Alternate/Virtual
Attendance)

Bob Marcum, Salo
Township (Virtual
Attendance)

Non- Voting Members Present

Tom Nelson, Itasca SWCD
(Alternate)

Other / Technical Advisors

Andy Arens, Itasca SWCD

Cameron Gustafson, Carlton SWCD

Matt Gutzmann, Itasca SWCD

Austin Steere, Itasca SWCD

Janet Smude, Aitkin SWCD

Jeff Hrubes, BWSR

Lynn Mizner, Logan Township

- ❖ A Roll Call of those in attendance was taken to start the meeting.
- ❖ The meeting was called to order at 11:30 am.
- ❖ Everyone was welcomed and introductions made.

Meeting Agenda:

- ❖ A motion was made by Tom Fasteland and seconded by Barb Dahl to approve the meeting agenda. The motion was carried unanimously by all voting members in attendance at the time by roll call.

Minutes of the July 27th, 2023 Policy Committee meeting:

- ❖ Were reviewed and approved as presented M/S/C Gary Peterson / Barb Dahl. The motion was carried unanimously by all voting members in attendance at the time by roll call.

Budget & Timeline Update:

- ❖ Matt Gutzman updated the group on progress including monthly Focus Meetings, and Advisory Committee meetings.
- ❖ The Plan is expected to be completed in late 2024, with BWSR approval anticipated in the fall.
- ❖ Implementation funding is expected in 2025.
- ❖ The project is right on track.
- ❖ The Planning Grant expires in December of 2025. 60% of the grant funds remain.
- ❖ Excess funds may be used for additional planning needs and information gathering. They may not be used for projects.

Summary of Advisory Topic Meetings:

- ❖ Matt Gutzmann shared that these meetings were held to identify issues and concerns in the watershed. Attendees voted to rank importance of the issues.
- ❖ Meeting summaries are available on the Itasca SWCD website. (www.itascaswcd.org/programs/1w1p)
- ❖ The group discussed the Rivers and Streams topic, potential mining activity, and point source pollution that should be covered under regulatory activities.
- ❖ Cal Saari commended the structure of these meetings and the success of the combined in person and virtual participation.

Priority Issue Statement List:

- ❖ A list of Draft Priority Issues was shared. This was compiled from all of the Topic Meetings.
- ❖ All issues will be included in the Plan, however these are the highest priority.
- ❖ Groundwater was discussed. Nitrates and arsenic are concerns. Information from the Department of Health will be relied upon. Screening vs. monitoring was discussed.
- ❖ A motion was made to approve the Priority Issues Document as presented M/S/C Gary Peterson / Tom Fastland. The motion was carried unanimously by all voting members in attendance.

Measurable Goal Numbers:

- ❖ Matt Gutzmann shared a Goal Development Worksheet and went through the seven goal areas.
- ❖ Stormwater was discussed and should be sure to include Pengilly.
- ❖ The goals are for the 10 years of the Plan. They will be reviewed after 5 years.
- ❖ A motion was made to use the document as a goal development worksheet M/S/C Tom Fasteland / Dave Peterson. The motion was carried unanimously by all voting members in attendance.

Implementation Structure

- ❖ Jeff Hrubes shared that there are two implementation structures that can carry this effort forward. Each has benefits, and can include all partners including the MLBO and Townships.
- ❖ The Collaboration / MOA structure is used by many 1W1P in northern Minnesota. The decision-making power stays with existing boards / units of government.
- ❖ A Joint Powers Board may also be formed. This Board can make their own decisions, which may make the decision-making process easier. They would have the authority of the lowest unit of government. This structure may create more steps in the decision-making process. There would be added costs of insurance and audits.
- ❖ Example documents for either form will be shared before the next meeting. A structure must be in place before the implementation grant is applied for.

Wrap Up

- ❖ Cal Saari mentions the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25th at 11:30 am. It will be held at the Hill City School.
- ❖ The next meeting will include a presentation on native / natural shorelines by Paul Radomski and Jeff Hrubes.
- ❖ Dave Peterson motioned to adjourn/ Tom Fasteland seconds the motion. Cal Saari adjourns the meeting at 2:15 pm.