



# Local Water Management Plan Advisory Committee (WMAC) Minutes

*Date | time* January 20, 2021 1:00 PM

*Location* Virtual Meeting via GoToMeetings

Meeting called by	Mille Lacs SWCD
Type of meeting	Regular quarterly meeting
Facilitators	Mille Lacs SWCD
Note taker	Harmony Maslowski, Mille Lacs SWCD

#### Attendees:

- Andre Lasalle, ML SWCD Supervisor
- Genny Reynolds, MLC Commissioner
- Mark Anderson, DNR
- Susan Shaw, ML SWCD
- Dilan Christiansen, MLC Env Res
- Barb Zeroth, NRCS
- Adele Olson, ML SWCD

#### The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to:

- Develop & implement the goals and objectives outlined in the Mille Lacs County Local Water Management Plan.
- Provide information to the public related to the protection and restoration of water resources.
- Fund and implement projects to monitor, protect and restore water resources.
- Advise and support appropriate governmental agency, local interest group and landowner efforts to promote sustainable land-use practices related to the protection of water resources.

Shaw called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm followed by group introductions.

Shaw asked for nominations for the office of chair. **Reynolds** nominated **Lasalle** as chair; Shaw second. **The motion carried.**

Shaw asked for nominations for the office of vice-chair. **Reynolds** nominated **Maslowski** as vice-chair; Lasalle second. **The motion carried.**

**Motion by Reynolds to approve the agenda as presented;** Shaw second. **The motion carried.**

**Motion by Reynolds to approve October 13th, 2020 minutes as presented;** Shaw second. **The motion carried.**

#### Local Water Management Plan Progress

Updates by Mille Lacs SWCD: Maslowski reported on the formation of a Forestry Tech Team for the Rum River Watershed. The team will be convening for the first time in early 2021 to discuss goals in our current Landscape Stewardship Plan and, going forward, our One Watershed One Plan. The team is likely to grow over time including DNR, Districts, MLBO, and consulting foresters. They will proactively explore and balance the needs of the watershed.

Shaw and Olson reported on the initial steps toward a Geological Atlas. The county does not currently have a geologic atlas and the SWCD is supporting moving forward with the development. Olson is working as an intern for the SWCD. Information on what a geologic atlas is can be found on the Mille Lacs SWCD website. Other resources will become available once it is completed and will also be found on the Mille Lacs SWCD website. Olson reported different levels of difficulty (easy, medium, hard) in plotting the well locations and she is about halfway through plotting the medium wells in Mille Lacs County. Comments: Anderson gave kudos on moving forward with the well assessment, noting the value of getting preliminary well records done is very helpful in the process, also noting many benefits of having a geologic atlas for the county.

Shaw reported on the landowner request to startup Agricultural Community Conversations and is exploring conversations around an Agricultural Business Partnership. This could include bringing together identified businesses in the community with the purpose to facilitate dialogue and incentivize good practices for those who have an interest in water quality. Maslowski reported on a similar exploration of conversations with members of the community who are interested in youth education or conservation education.

**Other Updates:** One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) – comprehensive watershed wide planning updates.

Snake River – Maslowski provided an update on the Snake River 1W1P. The Snake Technical Advisory committee has been discussing ‘Desired Future Conditions’ and will continue work to prioritize resources and establish measurable goals. The Policy Committee will be approving Issue Statements and the Land and Resource Narrative at their upcoming meeting. With new staff and policy committee members there is an upcoming orientation for the process tomorrow. BWSR staff will discuss the 1W1P process along with a review of the various committees. There will be an update of where the Snake is currently at in the planning process along with Microsoft Teams demonstration for Technical Advisory Members and a brief history of how the watershed has worked together through the Snake River Watershed Management Board. A short video is available on the webpage that provides an overview of the process.

Rum River – Maslowski provided an update on the Rum River 1W1P. The Technical Advisory Committee has been currently working in the categories of Surface Water, Groundwater, and Natural Resources. The discussions involve priority locations, actions, and outputs. The Policy Committee has been focused on Organizational Agreement conversations. The last meeting had discussion around the topic of ditch management. This is still an ongoing conversation around the strategy language related to ditch management (public and private) for Water Quality Restoration and Protection. Shaw reported that there will be a small meeting of Policy Committee Volunteers and other volunteers to discuss this issue before the next Policy Committee meeting. Shaw also added that a number of LGUs have yet to meet with their boards to discuss the Organizational Arrangement. Documents including the JPA and Mock Workplan have been reviewed and discussed by the SWCD Board. These documents meet their expectations and needs to move forward. These documents will be in front of the Policy Committee at the next scheduled PC meeting.

Shaw also clarified that block grant money will not go away with transition from the local comprehensive plan to the watershed comprehensive plan. Shaw also clarified that our current Water

Plan Advisory Committee is not a State requirement, this is an optional meeting that we have been using to keep everyone informed. When we get to the point where the comprehensive plan is done, and assuming the local boards will adopt the plan, our current local plan would go away but the funding would be applied to our watershed wide priorities. We are working toward, and it is our understanding, that our local priorities are in the new plan and the watershed partners are supporting our priorities in this process.

Maslowski reminded the committee that there are two other opportunities to receive updates on our Local Water plan goals and the 1W1P processes. All items have a webpage hosted on our SWCD website and these updates occur monthly at the Mille Lacs SWCD board meetings.

**Participant Check-in :** Question: What is your main focus/activity for the upcoming year?

Shaw shared the Mille Lacs SWCD progress report and highlighted the activities that are meeting the local water plan goals.

Zeroth commented that the NRCS is available to work together and would like to be a resource for the SWCD as well.

Shaw discussed that goal and the current barrier of staff time. Shaw discussed the possible benefit of the SWCD gaining a part-time staff to focus on Agricultural needs.

**Evaluation:** Lasalle commented that the meeting was efficient and on schedule.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, APRIL 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 pm.

**Meeting adjourned (motion Reynolds second Shaw) at 2:02 pm.**