



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER
ST. CLOUD
WATERSHED**

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Proceedings of the Mississippi River – St. Cloud 1W1P Policy Committee Meeting held on September 7, 2023. Chair, Tarryl Clark called the meeting to order at 11:02am.

Date / Time:	<i>September 7, 2023 11:00am - 1:00pm</i>
Location:	<i>In-Person: Sherburne History Center, 10775 27th Ave SE, Becker, MN 55308 Remote option available, use MS Teams Calendar Invite link</i>
Note Taker:	<i>Stephanie Hatzenbihler, Stearns SWCD</i>
1w1p Website:	https://www.millelacsswcd.org/1w1p/mississippi-river-st-cloud-watershed-plan/
Voting Members Present:	Benton County – Scott Johnson, Benton SWCD – Wade Bastian, Meeker County – *Danny Schiefelbein, Mille Lacs SWCD – Dan Campbell, Sherburne SWCD - Shelly Binsfeld, Sherburne County – Andrew Hulse, Stearns County – Tarryl Clark, Stearns SWCD – Tom Gregory, Wright County – *Tina Diedrick, Wright SWCD – Jeff Burns
Alternate Voting Members Present:	Meeker SWCD - John Haffley
Alternative Non-voting members present:	Sherburne County - Raeanne Danielowski
Voting Members Absent:	Meeker SWCD – Bob Schiefelbein
Partners and Staff Present:	Darren Mayers – BWSR staff, Stephanie Hatzenbihler – Stearns SWCD staff, Gerry Maciej – Benton SWCD staff, Dan Cibulka – Sherburne SWCD staff, Kyle Blazek– Stearns County staff, Alicia O’Hare – Wright SWCD staff, Becky Schlorf - Stearns County staff, Sarah Boser- ISG, *Francine Larson – Sherburne SWCD staff, *Miranda Wagner - Sherburne SWCD staff

*Individuals joined via Zoom virtually.

Welcome and Introductions.

1. **Name, LGU.** Introductions of Policy Committee (PC) members, partners, and staff.

Review and Approve Agenda.

1. Approve Meeting agenda. **Motion by Johnson to approve meeting agenda as presented; second by Gregory.** Affirmative: Johnson, Clark, Burns, Campbell, Bastian, Gregory, Diedrick, Schiefelbein, Binsfeld, Hulse, Haffley. Opposed: None. **Motion carried.**

Review and approve 07-06-2023 meeting minutes.

1. Approve meeting minutes. **Motion by Gregory to approve meeting minutes as presented; second by Campbell.** Affirmative: Johnson, Clark, Burns, Campbell, Bastian, Gregory, Diedrick, Schiefelbein, Binsfeld, Hulse, Haffley. Opposed: None. **Motion carried.**

Project Update (Cibulka)

1. **Timeline & Activities (Cibulka)** Cibulka presented on the current step in the planning process and shared that we are on schedule to meet our timeline goals for plan reviews near the end of the planning.
2. **Financial Report (Cibulka)** Cibulka presented the financial report. Maciej shared that we are on track with our budget and with SWCD expenses have been lower than planned likely due to work accomplished prior
3. **CAC Meeting Report (Cibulka & Hatzenbihler)** Hatzenbihler presented on the 2nd CAC committee meeting attendance, discussion topics, and how the staff incorporated the feedback from the CAC.
4. **TAC Liaison Report (TAC Liaisons)** Binsfeld shared that she was able to attend one of the TAC meetings and reported that the committee worked on the issue framework and the implementation table. Cibulka reviewed the sign-up for TAC Liaisons

DRAFT Issue Framework Approval (Cibulka)

- Issue - Surface Water (Pollutant Runoff)
 - Hulse suggested adding a deliverable that recommends a standard process for water safety testing, criteria, and communication when public beaches are closed.
 - Binsfeld suggested adding a deliverable that provides education on the difference between testing at beaches that results in closures and entire lake water quality standards and impairments.
 - Boser recommended that this be considered for actions that will be in the implementation table or programs.
- Issue - Surface Water (Altered Hydrology)
 - Burns asked a question about measuring the second goal
 - Johnson asked a question about targeting criteria “county culvert projects” and a discussion followed on whether this should be moved to implementation strategies. Diedrich suggested language change to “culvert projects.”
- Issue - Surface Water (Internal Load Processes)
- Issue - Groundwater (Quantity)
 - Danielowski asked a question about sandpoint projects and submitting notice to the state
- Issue - Groundwater (Quality)
 - Hulse asked a question about partnering with entities that are required to complete groundwater testing, such as landfills and energy facilities.
- Issue - Habitat and Natural Resources
 - Burns asked a question about how we are targeting habitat locations

- Johnson shared concerns about public ditch repair petitions, Multipurpose Drainage Management Plans
- Issue - Landscape Resiliency (Soil Health)
 - Schiefelbein asked about pasture management practices and which goals it would make progress towards.
 - Gregory recommended including soil sampling to establish baseline conditions.
 - Burns shared that NRCS uses pasture rotation as a measure of soil health

Overall, several committee members expressed appreciation to the work that has been accomplished so far on the issue framework.

Approve Issue Framework. **Motion by Bastian to approve issue framework as presented with the understanding that it is a draft and will continue being updated; second by Binsfeld.** A roll call vote was held with the following results. Affirmative: Johnson, Clark, Burns, Campbell, Bastian, Gregory, Diedrich, Schiefelbein, Binsfeld, Hulse, Haffley. Opposed: None. **Motion carried.**

Implementation Agreement Discussions (Cibulka)

- Attorneys have met twice so far and are in the process of drafting a letter on the pros and cons of a Joint Powers Entity (JPE).
- Benton County attorney will begin drafting a JPE agreement using the Rum River Watershed as a template
- Feedback from Policy Committee
 - Clark shared that **Stearns County** has had success with the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), but the county is comfortable moving forward with a JPE.
 - Hulse shared that **Sherburne County** is more comfortable with the JPE and has experience with the Rum River JPE. He requests seeing what's different between the two if anything
 - Gregory shared that **Stearns SWCD** has had success with the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), but the county is comfortable moving forward with a JPE.
 - Johnson shared that **Benton County** prefers the JPE.
 - Burns shared that **Wright SWCD** has experience with JPA, but prefers JEP
 - Binsfeld shared that **Sherburne SWCD** is comfortable with either but wants to stress the importance of putting processes and systems in place that will work well.
 - Schiefelbein shared that **Meeker County** has had success with the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), but the county is comfortable moving forward with a JPE.
 - Diedrich shared that **Wright County** is comfortable with the JPE
- The JPE will need to hire an attorney, an accountant and this can be done through a member-entity or a private entity.

BWSR Updates

- BWSR Board has approved the Mississippi River - St. Cloud FY25 WBIF for \$1,271,008.

Next meeting is anticipated for December 7, 2023 at 11am.

Clark adjourned the meeting at 12:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Hatzenbihler, Stearns County SWCD, Water Plan Coordinator on behalf of Jeff Burns, Wright SWCD, Board Supervisor.