



UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER – GRAND RAPIDS 1W1P

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Juen 25th, 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

Bob Marcum, Salo
Township

Non- Voting Members Present

Tom Nelson, Itasca SWCD
(Alternate)

Lynn Mizner, Logan Twp
(Virtual Attendance)

Other / Technical Advisors

Andy Arens, Itasca SWCD

Cameron Gustafson, Carlton
SWCD

Matt Gutzmann, Itasca
SWCD

Janet Smude, Aitkin SWCD

Jeff Hrubes, BWSR
(Virtual Attendance)

Darren Mayers, BWSR

Aly Bergstrom, Cass SWCD

Karen Ebert, MCIT

- ❖ 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 April 24th, 2024 Policy Committee meeting:

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

Implementation Structure – Joint Powers

- ❖ Matt Gutzmann shared summaries of the two Implementation structure options available – a Joint Powers Collaboration and a Joint Powers Entity. Pros and cons to each option were discussed.
- ❖ Karen Ebert, MCIT shared information on a Joint Power Entity. This creates a new governmental unit. It could potentially speed up the decision-making process. Each partner would no longer need to take action on contracts. The Entity would make the decisions.
- ❖ The Collaboration / MOA structure is used by most 1W1Ps in northern Minnesota and is working well. The group discussed being consistent with other 1W1Ps that partners are working on.
- ❖ Administrative costs were discussed and noted to be present with either option. The Implementation Grant can cover these expenses.
- ❖ Cass County and Townships are welcome to participate, but not required. It has been great to have townships participate – a good example for other 1W1Ps. A training / information session for townships was suggested. It may be good to include this with the countywide township meetings.
- ❖ After discussion, Dave Peterson made a motion to proceed with the Joint Powers Collaboration Model. Gary Peterson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and it was approved by all voting members in attendance. It was noted that a quorum of the Policy Committee was present, and the motion carried.

Timeline & Budget Update:

- ❖ Matt Gutzman updated the group on the project budget. As of mid-June 44% of the funds remain.
- ❖ Funds were not originally allocated for the Landscape Stewardship Plan, however the grant was able to cover those costs. Changes in staff also impacted the budget.
- ❖ Houston Engineering (Moriya Rufer) may be out of funding by late July. Tom Fasteland made a motion to allocate an additional \$3,000 to her budget, if needed. The motion was seconded by Gary Peterson and passed unanimously.
- ❖ Matt Gutzmann reviewed the project timeline. The 60-day public comment period begins on July 26th and ends on September 24th
- ❖ A Public Hearing may be held in October.
- ❖ The Plan is expected to be completed in late 2024, with BWSR approval anticipated in the fall.
- ❖ Implementation funding is anticipated in 2025.
- ❖ The project is right on track.

Summary of the Draft Plan:

- ❖ Matt Gutzmann noted that there were 94 comments shared on the draft plan through May. Comments are requested by July 8th – this will be before the beginning of the 60-day comment period.
- ❖ Thanks were expressed to Dain Erickson and Mitch Brinks for their contributions to the plan.
- ❖ Education and Outreach will be the basis of the Plan as implementation is promoted.
- ❖ Existing committees will continue to meet and guide implementation activities.

Wrap Up

- ❖ Cal Saari noted that the next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 19th at 11:30 am. It will be held at the Hill City School, if it is available. The group agreed to



this meeting date. This meeting will include a discussion on publicly noticing the public hearing.

- ❖ The Public Hearing and Policy Committee meeting was tentatively set for Friday, October 18th, at 11:30 am at the Hill City School, if it is available. A quorum is needed for this meeting / hearing.
- ❖ Dave Peterson motioned to adjourn / Tom Fasteland seconds the motion. Cal Saari adjourned the meeting at 12:40 pm.