



Cannon River One Watershed, One Plan

“Aligning local water planning on major watershed boundaries with state strategies towards prioritized, targeted and measurable implementation plans”

Minutes

Policy Committee Meeting

March 1, 2017

Rice County Government Services Building
320 Third St NW, Faribault, MN 55021

Policy Committee Members: Brad Anderson (Goodhue County), Jeff Beckman (Goodhue SWCD), Kevin Chamberlain (Dakota SWCD), Dan Hansen (Steele SWCD), Brian Harguth (Waseca County), James Hedeem (Belle Creek WD), Carrie Jennings (North Cannon River WMO), Mike Ludwig (Rice SWCD), Steven Rohlfing (Le Sueur County), Jim Struck (Le Sueur SWCD) Galen Malecha (Rice County), Keith Morgan (Waseca SWCD).

Also in Attendance: Brad Becker (Dakota County staff), Brad Behrens (Rice County staff), Ashley Gallagher (Dakota SWCD staff), Jayne Hager Dee (Dakota SWCD Supervisor – Alternate to Policy Committee), Kelly Hunt (Waseca County staff), Beau Kennedy (Goodhue SWCD staff), Shaina Keseley (BWSR), Josh Mankowski (Le Sueur County staff), Jenny Mocol-Johnson (BWSR), Steve Pahs (Rice SWCD staff), Glen Roberson (Goodhue SWCD staff), Mike Schultz (Le Sueur SWCD staff), Terence Swihart (Rice County Attorney), Brian Watson (Dakota SWCD staff)

1. Open Meeting

- a. Watson (Dakota SWCD) opened the meeting at 9:15am. Introductions were made.
- b. Acceptance of agenda.

Motion by Jennings, Second by Beckman to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

2. Introduction to the Cannon River One, Watershed One Plan (1W1P)

- a. Mocol-Johnson (BWSR Board Conservationist) provided a presentation on the new state strategy for comprehensive local water plans. Concept began with the Local Government Water Roundtable (LGWR), which had representation from Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD), and Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD). In 2012 legislation was enacted to streamline planning and align planning on watershed boundaries. The pilot watersheds started in 2014 and included Root River, Yellow Medicine River, Red Lake River, North Fork Crow River, and Lake Superior North. These pilots helped to develop, test and inform the 1W1P process. The state strategy is on a ten year cycle and includes completing the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) prior to 1W1P. State planning strategies also include incorporation of a variety of State Agency Plans including but not

limited to plans from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Metropolitan Council will also be involved in the Dakota County portion due to the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act. The overarching goal is to have a prioritized, targeted and measurable implementation plan.

Keseley (BWSR Clean Water Fund Specialist) provided a presentation on how the state will transition from County water planning to watershed based planning. The goal is to have to have every watershed covered in the state by 2025.

BWSR will encourage initiation of 1W1P by:

- i. Coordinating plan development with existing plan processes
- ii. Maintaining geographic distribution of planning efforts
- iii. Providing planning grants
- iv. Emphasizing planning that addresses state priorities

In the future, 1W1P will be required to receive State funding. Each of the three Associations that participated in the LGWR has adopted a policy paper that shifts Clean Water Funds from a competitive process to a block grant format for watersheds that have completed 1W1P.

Keseley finished the presentation with a diagram regarding the various committees and groups identified under the 1W1P Operational Procedures.

- The Advisory Committee is required. It will consist of many stakeholder groups including local government, state agencies, federal agencies, non-profit groups, growers associations, lake associations, etc. Their purpose is to make recommendations on plan content and implementation to the Policy Committee.
- The Planning Work Group is strongly recommended. It is a subset of the Advisory Committee that consists of local staff, BWSR Board Conservationist and the Consultant. Their purpose is to organize logistics, formulate recommendations for the Advisory Committee and synthesize information from the Advisory Committee.
- The Policy Committee is required. It consists of an elected official from each participating local government unit including one County Board member, one SWCD supervisor, one representative from the Watershed District and one from the Watershed Management Organization. Their purpose is to make final decision about plan content and submittal, as well as expenditure of planning grant funds. The end goal is to have each member take the plan back to their boards for local adoption.

Gallagher (Dakota SWCD) provided an overview of the planning grant and anticipated schedules. There has been a significant amount of effort put into planning just to get to this point. The planning grant has been submitted to BWSR. The Rice SWCD (fiscal agent) will approve the grant at their March 8th meeting.

The total BWSR planning grant amount is \$235,923. The timeline for implementing the planning grant and developing the watershed plan was reviewed. Items highlighted included:

- Two year process
- Committees meet throughout
- Seeking input and drafting watershed plan most substantial portion
- Review includes BWSR approval and local adoption
- Firm completion deadline is February 2019
- Next task is hiring a consultant and scheduling a kick-off (open house) event

- b. Watson (Dakota SWCD) gave an overview of the organizational structure. Each participating local unit of government has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to collaborate in the development of a comprehensive watershed plan for the Cannon River. The Policy Committee is not a Joint Powers Board (JPB) and eligible to receive State funds at this time. During the planning process, it will be required that an organizational structure to implement the plan's projects and programs be identified. This will require discussion on new formal agreements and structures. Watson asked the group stay informed, listen to stakeholders, and update their respective boards throughout the planning process. The Policy Committee ultimately has the decision for the watershed plan submitted to the State.

3. Election of Officers

Chair: Watson opened nominations for Chair. Watson called for nominations three times. Morgan nominated Rohlfig, second by Beckman. Nominations were closed. **Unanimous ballot cast for Rohlfig. Motion carried.**

The meeting was turned over to Chairman Rohlfig.

Vice Chair: Chair Rohlfig opened nominations for Vice Chair. Beckman nominated Anderson, second by Chamberlain. A call for nominations was made three more times, hearing none, nominations were closed. **Unanimous ballot cast for Anderson. Motion carried.**

Secretary: Chair Rohlfig opened nominations for secretary. Anderson nominated Malecha, second by Jennings. A call for nominations was made three more times, hearing none, nominations were closed. **Unanimous ballot cast for Malecha. Motion carried.**

4. Adoption of Bylaws

A new set of Bylaws was distributed with edits from the Rice County Attorney. The majority of changes were minor. The most significant change was to Section VII. Changes helped clarify the role of Advisory Committee, Planning Workgroup and possible subcommittees to the Policy Committee. It was noted that the Planning Workgroup is currently developing a list of stakeholders for the Advisory Committee.

Motion by Jennings, second by Hedeem to adopted the Bylaws with changes as presented. Motion carried.

5. Approve Consultant Selection Process

Gallagher reviewed the Request for Proposal for consultant selection. As currently written, the Planning Workgroup would review applications, interview top proposals, and recommend a consultant for Policy Committee for approval. Evaluation criteria and timeline were both reviewed. Timeline assumes that the Policy Committee will set next meeting for May 3rd.

It was noted that approximately 5-7 proposals from consultants are expected. Discussion occurred on whether Policy Committee members should be part of the selection process. After discussion, it was decided that staff are most qualified to carry out the consultant selection process.

Information on all proposals submitted will be provided to the Policy Committee and eventually posted to the Cannon River 1W1P web site.

Motion by Harguth, second by Jennings to approve the RFP process for selection of a consultant. Motion carried.

6. Establish Policy Committee Meeting Schedule

Staff proposed Policy Committee meetings be scheduled every other month, on the first Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. It was asked if an April meeting would be needed; staff does not see the need. The next meeting was scheduled for May 3rd at 9:00 a.m. at the Rice County Government Services Building.

7. Kick-off Event Planning

The Planning Workgroup has discussed a “Kick-off Event” to initiate the Plan development process. The current idea was to hold two identical sessions; one in the late afternoon and one in the evening on the same day, such as 3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. This meeting would be open to the public and all stakeholders would be invited.

It was noted that this “Kick-off” event would occur after consultant selection so they could participate; scheduling of event would be mid to late May. Chair Rohfling asked for input.

It was asked who would facilitate the event. The consensus was that the Policy Committee or staff would facilitate the event but the consultant plays a large role. The format discussed was a short presentation and then more of an open house format. It was noted that a clear vision be expressed in an informal setting.

Possible locations to hold the event included River Bend Nature Center (probably too small), Faribault Armory (probably too small), Northfield Middle School, and South Central College. Email any other ideas to Gallagher and Watson.

It was asked that once the Plan is established will it overrule existing local water plans. BWSR staff responded that there would be a transition period were a County may have a Watershed based Plan as well as a County Plan to cover all geographical areas. Eventually, each Counties current Water Plan will be covered by Watershed based plans.

It was noted that the 7-county metropolitan soil and water conservation districts and counties have different watershed plan requirements due to the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act. The North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization located in Dakota County already has a local plan based on a watershed boundary but could choose to adopt the 1W1P to supersede their current watershed plan. Dakota County and the Dakota County SWCD do not have that option and it remains to be seen how the State will fully develop the 1W1P concept in the 7-County Metropolitan area. Participation in 1W1P by metropolitan local units of government is voluntary as they are not held to the 2025 timeline mentioned earlier in the BWSR staff presentation.

The MOA map was reviewed. This map shows the planning boundaries which are slightly different than the actual watershed drainage area. Counties with less than 5% land area can opt out of the plan and include that area in another 1W1P process. Blue Earth, Scott, and Freeborn counties all had very minimal geographical areas within the Cannon River Watershed and chose not to participate. The Cannon River 1W1P Boundary also includes a portion of the Upper Mississippi River/Lake Pepin Watershed, as that made the most sense for Goodhue County planning purposes and is acceptable according to BWSR guidance.

Motion by Hansen, second by Anderson to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Galen Malecha". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Galen Malecha, Secretary
Cannon River Watershed 1W1 Policy Committee