

Mississippi River Sartell Watershed

Policy Committee Meeting Minutes



Date/Time: Wednesday March 11, 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Location: Rice Lions Building – 101 NW 1st St. Rice MN 56379

Voting members present: Chuck Rau (Benton SWCD), Ed Popp (Benton County), Tom Gregory (Stearns SWCD), Joe Perske (Stearns County), Scott Saehr (Morrison SWCD)

Voting members absent: Kelly Applegate (MLBO), Randy Winscher (Morrison County)

Staff/Public present: Stephanie Hatzenbihler (Stearns CD), Kyle Weimann (Stearns CD) Mike McMillin (Benton SWCD), Destiny McDonald (Morrison SWCD), Zach Guttormson (BWSR), Robert Wall (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe) Rachel Olm (HEI) Duane Kroll (Ag) Randy Klaphake (Ag) Eric Altena (MN DNR) Wade Bastian (Benton SWCD)

Minute taker: Mike McMillin – Benton SWCD

1. Call to order:

- Popp called the meeting to order at 8:34 am. Introductions were made by those in attendance.

2. Approve Policy Committee Meeting minutes from 1/14/26

- Rau moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Perske, motion carried

3. Public Comment Period:

- No Comments

4. Fiscal Agent Report on Planning Grant:

- McDonald stated that 38% has been spent to date.

5. Recent Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries:

- Olm gave updates on the January 14th and February 11th TAC meetings.

6. Community Advisory Committee Update:

- Hatzenbihler gave an update on the January 28th Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings. CAC comments are included in the board packet. Next meeting is TBD.

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7. Landscape Stewardship Plan Process Update:

- Hatzenbihler gave an update on the January 30th LSP meeting. Next meeting is planned for March 25th at the Holdingford City Hall.

8. Plan Section 3: Watershed Opportunities:

- Olm updated PC on changes to the section since the last draft was presented to the PC. The section on Environmental Justice was moved from Planning Lens to Other Considerations.
- Motion by Rau to approve plan as presented as a working document, 2nd by Perske, all in favor, motion carried.

9. Measurable Goals:

- Olm reviews the measurable goals framework.
- Discussion followed on short term vs. desired future conditions, buffers, chloride and water storage.

10. Formal Agreement Structures:

- Discussion on Collaborative vs. Entity, advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Consensus is for Hatzenbihler to coordinate with the SWCD's, Counties and County Attorneys to set a preliminary framework for the agreement.

11. 2019 Little Rock Lake Drawdown:

- Altena gave an update on the 2019 Drawdown results including water clarity, algae and fish population, vegetation and lessons learned.
- Altena also updated PC on potential plans for a 2nd drawdown in 2028.

Popp adjourned the meeting at 10:12 am.

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