

# Mississippi River Sartell Watershed Policy Committee Meeting Notes

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

**Location:** Watab Townhall, 660 75<sup>th</sup> St NW Sauk Rapids MN 56379

**Voting members present:** Chuck Rau (Benton SWCD), Ed Popp (Benton County), Aryln Lawrenz (Stearns SWCD), Scott Saehr (Morrison SWCD)

**Voting members absent:** Kelly Applegate (MLBO), Randy Winscher (Morrison County) Joe Perske (Stearns County)

**Staff present:** Stephanie Hatzenbihler (Stearns SWCD) Kyle Weimann (Stearns SWCD), Mike McMillin (Benton SWCD), Destiny McDonald (Morrison SWCD), Zach Guttormson (BWSR), Brad Wozney (BWSR) Rachel Olm (HEI)

**Minute taker:** Mike McMillin – Benton SWCD

- 1. Call to order/approve agenda:** Popp called the meeting to order at 8:38 am. Introductions made, and the check-in question answered by those in attendance. Lawrenz moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Saehr, motion carried.
- 2. Consider an addition to the TAC membership:** Discussion on adding Kayli Overland – Legacy Works Group/Sentinel Landscapes to Technical Advisory Committee. Sentinel Landscapes is replacing the void left by the Nature Conservancy when they had staff turnover.

A motion was made by Rau to add Kayli Overland – Legacy Works Group/Sentinel Landscapes to the TAC. Seconded by Lawrenz. Motion carried.

- 3. Planning Vision Statement Selection:** Hatzenbihler presented 5 draft vision statements to the Policy Committee (PC). Following discussion group's consensus was option 2 as presented – “A healthy and accessible Mississippi River Sartell Watershed, ensuring sustainable natural resources for our community's future.
- 4. Community Engagement Plan and Kickoff Event Proposal:** Hatzenbihler presented IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum with the focus on the “Involve” level of public participation. A minimum of 3 meetings will be held with a maximum of 5. Rau questioned what groups would be invited and discussion followed on numbers, who, online surveys & public comment periods, keeping people informed and a possible bus tour.

The Public Kickoff Event Proposal was also presented. This included possible event titles, dates and times, location, schedule, food options and registration requirements. Idea is to hold a guided conversation.

Discussion took place on the dates with the consensus of the group being the earlier dates in July working better for the members, eliminating July 31<sup>st</sup> and August dates. Crane Meadows NWR has a classroom available with room for 50 – 70 people with plenty of parking.

Discussion on invites vs. open to the public. The preference of staff is to send out invites to the list of stakeholders and then depending on response possibly open to the public. Preference would be to allow 1 – 2 attendees from each stakeholder. If anybody has contact info for any of the stakeholders please forward it to Hatzenbihler.

Rau liked the concept and thought that the everybody on the stakeholder list down to the Ag businesses should be invited.

Popp requested that the absent voting members are consulted with on possible invites.

**5. Introduction to Watershed Primer:** Rachel Olm (HEI) presented the draft “Mississippi River Sartell Watershed: A Watershed Primer” to the PC that will be presented to the TAC later today. Discussion of BWSR plan requirements followed. Potential items to add include adding hunting to the list activities that take place in the watershed, history of Little Rock Lake, drainage map (public and private if possible), relationships between ground water and surface water, irrigation and DWSMA information.

**6. Proposed process for issue identification and prioritization:** Olm presented the process HEI uses for gathering a list of potential issues. Any state agencies responses, local water management plans, agency reports and other publications that can be collected will be reviewed, and a list created.

Rau mentioned checking with Dr. Matthew Julius from St. Cloud State University and the benefits of mini wetlands.

Popp commented on the effects of tile drainage and tile water vs. surface water.

**7. Checkout and Adjournment:** Popp adjourned the meeting at 9:40 am.