

## **Lower St. Croix Steering Committee Meeting**

**Zoom**

**Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**1:00PM**

**Attending:** Tom Dietrich – Washington County, Todd Kulaf – Isanti SWCD, Barbara Heitkamp – EMWREP/LSC, Emily Heinz – CLFLWD, Jennifer Hahn – MN Extension/LSC, Jamie Schurbon – Anoka SWCD, Paul Swanson – Pine SWCD, Caleb Anderson – Pine County, Karen Kill – BCWD, Michelle Jordan and Barb Peichel – BWSR, Susanna Wilson Witkowski – Chisago County, Mike Isensee – CMSCWD, John Hanson – VBWD, Jay Riggs – WCD, Matt Downing – MSCWMO, Craig Mell – Chisago SWWD, Laura Jester – Keystone Waters LLC, Angela Defenbaugh – WCD, Talisha Zimmerman – Isanti County, Angie Hong – EMWREP/WCD, Becca Oldenburg – WCD

### **Call to Order**

Angie Hong started the meeting at 1:03PM.

### **Welcome and introductions**

Angie Hong asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

### **Administrative updates**

Craig Mell shared budget updates and timelines for FY21 and FY23 grants. The departure of Sunrise River WMO was discussed with their final date as part of the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership (LSCWP) being February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Angie Hong gave a reminder about the upcoming Policy Committee Meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. The Board Packet for this meeting will be sent out on January 17<sup>th</sup> in light of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Angie Hong directed everyone to review two proposals for grant administration, falling under category A10 of the plan. The first proposal is for Laura Jester to assist with grant and progress reporting. The second proposal was from the Washington Conservation District for coordination among the Policy Committee, Steering Committee, Advisory Committee, and work plan activity planning team to be performed by Becca Oldenburg; as well as administration, hiring and payroll administration for the positions of Agronomy Outreach Specialist and Shared Services Educator; and coordination with hiring subcommittees performed by Jay Riggs. Angie Hong called for an approval for both proposals which passed.

### **Status Updates on FY21 WBIF Funded Projects**

Angie Hong requested that partners who have open contracts with Chisago SWCD provide status updates at the meeting. Updates are included in the table below.

<b>LSC WP</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Project Name &amp; updates</b>	<b>Date encumbered</b>	<b>WBIF encumbered</b>
<b>Pine SWCD</b>	A2	<b>Hinze Project</b> – waiting for construction postponed due to weather.	June, 2022	\$ 8,477.00
<b>Chisago SWCD</b>	A4	<b>NS AG</b> – encumbered \$24k, with \$16k remaining. 75% is for cover crops. May transfer funds to other partners if needed. Chisago is transferring \$30k to WCD and will use other funds to backfill the approved projects in their county.	July, 2022	\$ 40,000.00
<b>Washington CD</b>	A4	<b>NS AG</b> – spent all funds on cover crop projects. Chisago is transferring \$30k to WCD to fund 3 new projects.	August, 2022	\$ 30,000.00
<b>Pine SWCD</b>	A4	<b>NS AG</b> – All spent. Check in hand.	August, 2022	\$ 10,000.00
<b>Isanti SWCD</b>	A4	<b>NS AG</b> – Three landowners interested in cover crops for 2023.	August, 2022	\$ 10,000.00
<b>Anoka CD</b>	A4	<b>NS AG</b> – no funds encumbered. May not be able to spend funds. May transfer funds to other partners if needed. Chisago SWCD, WCD, and ACD will meet to discuss.	September, 2022	\$ 10,000.00
<b>CMSCWD</b>	A5	<b>Big Marine</b> – going out to bid in early 2023.	June, 2022	\$ 10,000.00
<b>SWWD</b>	A5	<b>Trout Brook</b> – specs and full package complete and project is out for bid. More than 12 bidders at pre-bid meeting.	October, 2022	\$ 350,000.00
<b>CMSCWD</b>	A6	<b>Goose Lake</b> – completed and final paperwork submitted.	June, 2022	\$ 10,000.00
<b>WCD</b>	A8	<b>Urban</b> – complete. Reviewing targeted monitoring protocol and will have comments completed by the end of January. Once done, the sweet suite of protocols will be posted to the website.	October, 2021	\$ 2,000.00
<b>CMSCWD</b>	A8	<b>NE WC SWA</b> – started in the fall. On track to be done by fall 2023.	December, 2021	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Pine County</b>	A8	<b>Rock Lake SWA</b> – Pine Co work is done and Pine SWCD work is in progress and on track to be finished spring 2023.	February, 2022	\$ 12,541.40
<b>EOR</b>	A8	<b>Sunrise River PDA</b> – 75% of deliverables complete, on track to finish February 2023.	September, 2022	\$ 27,200.00

<b>WCD</b>	A8	<b>Street sweeping</b> – Tree canopy complete for most communities; drainage areas being assessed for final analysis. Scandia, Marine, Lake Elmo, and MSCWMO cities. Doing batch analysis. May come in under budget.	November 2022	\$ 15,000.00
<b>CLFLWD</b>	A8	<b>Street sweeping</b> – City of Wyoming tree canopy complete, next step is meeting with the community to deploy a street sweeping plan	November 2022	\$ 8,000.00
<b>ACD</b>	A8	<b>Street sweeping</b> – 90% of Linwood canopy analysis is done	November 2022	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Chisago SWCD</b>	A8	<b>Street sweeping</b> – North Branch and Rush City are underway.	November 2022	\$ 15,000.00

### **Review and Discussion on Proposed Policies and Calendar for Project Approvals**

Tom Dietrich shared the policy document for discussion. Craig Mell said this document will be headed to the upcoming Policy Committee Meeting. Tom Dietrich shared that the updates in this document seek to address timeline and conflict of interest concerns. Matt Downing asked if the updates address the topic of shifting funds allocated to one funding category to another. Jay Riggs stated that there would be a request of funds within the budget allocation. Paul Swanson suggested that there should be a message sent to all LSCWP members stating funding expenditure from each category to help avoid partner competition. Craig Mell shared that under current policy flexibility to shift \$50,000 from one project category to another exists. Jamie Schurbon suggested adding or referencing this policy in the document.

Karen Kill brought up the language used to define conflict of interest and suggested that a legal representative should be invited to the Policy Committee to help address concerns that have come up in the past and resulted in the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization (WMO) leaving the LSCWP. Jamie Schurbon agreed that this was part of Sunrise River WMO's concerns.

The topic of offering partial payment was put forwarded by Jamie Schurbon to follow the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BSWR) grant payment model. Emily Heinz noted that this would be helpful especially for large projects like CLFLWD's wetland restoration project or SWWD's Trout Brook project. Matt Downing stated that the LSCWP should be focused on collaboration.

Angie Hong discussed how the Policy Committee has divided opinions with some members wanting projects planned in advance to account for what funds will be available in the grant cycle and some preferring that planning occur in the same year as the funding. A plan for the presentation to the Policy Committee was laid out with presenting the flow chart document, writing a cover memo, and laying out the document as a recommendation for approval.

Karen Kill brought up the language around exhausting funding sources and the order of application considerations, stating that it felt like the considerations were written in a ranking order, which then should be modified.

Due to the discussion on this document ongoing and having a time constraint to discuss all highlighted proposed changes Tom Dietrich offered to send the document out for further editing and invited members to attend the Planning Team meeting the following day to finish edits.

The update to the calendar was tabled due to time constraints.

### **Program Updates**

Program updates were tabled until the next meeting due to time constraints.

### **Year-end Reporting and Tracking of Project Implementation**

Jennifer Hahn gave an update on the work her and Barbara have been doing with Michelle Jordan to update the plan appendices and the goals outlined that need to be completed this cycle. Currently, the plan is written that Agronomy Outreach Specialist (Jennifer) and Shared Services Educator (Barbara) are responsible for each goal listed instead of the Lower Saint Croix Watershed Partnership. Michelle Jordan shared that there are differences between the plan and the grant work plan and that updates will be made to try to capture work that was completed towards the plan without utilizing grant funds. This will help address a current gap that exists in tracking this work. Michelle Jordan also gave an update about the amended plan outlining two options: wait until spring 2023 for a new shorter option in which the BWSR Director can sign off on amendments or continue with current policy on plan amendments before the change goes into effect.

### **Adjourn**

Angie Hong called to adjourn at 3:12.