**Steering Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2-3:30pm**

**Notes**

1. Planning team updates
   * Barbara Heitkamp will begin facilitating steering committee meetings moving forward. The LSC flowchart will be updated to note that subcommittees should send their projects to Barbara instead of Angie moving forward. Angie will continue to facilitate the policy committee meetings.
   * Introductions: Tom Dietrich just joined Washington County as a planner and will be the new steering committee rep. Other committee members in attendance: Barbara Heitkamp (LSC/EMWREP), Angie Hong (EMWREP), Craig Mell (Chisago SWCD), Mike Isensee (CMSCWD), Stephanie Souter (Washington County), Karen Kill (BCWD), Susanna Wilson-Witkowski (SWWD), Jaime Schurbon (Anoka SWCD – Sunrise River WMO), Emily Heinz (CLFLWD), Caleb Anderson (Pine Co), Joel Larson (U of MN Extension), Becky Wozney (Anoka SWCD), Jerry Spetzman (Chisago LID), Paul Swanson (Pine SWCD), Matt Downing (MSCWMO), Matt Moore and John Loomis (SWWD), Michelle Jordan and Barb Peichel (BWSR)
   * 2022 Timeline for implementation and planning

Feb. 23 -March 23: [Local partners report-out projects completed in 2021 using spreadsheet](https://clflwd-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/emily_heinz_clflwd_org/ETS0UDrHX5NLh89IM1WDaxUBD2PW-SnQvjvDKFuxFtt90g?e=Nhry7B)

* Partners have begun adding projects to the spreadsheet. Continue doing so but be sure to coordinate with one another so partner projects don’t get double-counted. If a project helps to meet more than one goal, enter it in both rows but only enter the funding once.
* Angie entered in several projects for BCWD, CMSCWD, MSCWMO, and Washington County

March 23: Advisory Committee meeting - review revised 2022 Annual Plan of Work and 2021 Annual Report to send to Policy Committee

April 25: Policy Committee reviews 2021 annual report and reviews/recommends 2022 Annual Plan of Work for local approval

* + - * A vote of 2/3rdof the members present is necessary to move a recommended annual work plan on to the governing boards.
      * Susanna has reserved the Chisago County Government Center for an in-person meeting and there will be a hybrid option as well for people to participate via WebEx
      * The 2022 Annual Plan includes all work the partnership is doing, not just the WBIF grant

May: Local partners send 2022 Annual Plan of Work to their respective boards for local approval

* + - * Approval from 2/3rdof the governing bodies is needed to approve the plan
  + Emily shared policy language for a fast track policy. This will need to be approved by local partners at the same time as the annual plan of work
  + Financial update – Craig Mell
    - Not a lot has changed since the last steering committee meeting. There are a few categories in the grant where we have not yet spent funds
  + Discussion: possible transition from JPC to JPE
    - Craig working with Jeff Fuge, Chisago County Attorney, to prep a memo with more detail
    - Jamie researching costs to become a JPE – likely more than currently
      * $4200 for insurance
      * Substantially more staff time if the policy committee begins meeting more frequently
      * $20k extra if the group begins including per diems for policy committee members
      * May have additional attorney costs if there are conflicts of interest between Chisago County and the JPE and the entity needs to hire an outside attorney
    - Options to reduce frequency of meetings: Create an executive committee that meets monthly (Dakota Co example); Designate an authorized entity; Steering committee meets less frequently
    - If the policy committee votes to become a JPE in April, the decision will need to go to the local entities for 2/3 approval
    - Updates on conversations with other local partners
      * Stephanie, Tom and Jamie met with Fran Miron today to get his opinion on moving to a JPE. He continues to have many reservations about making a transition. The other policy committee members are all in favor of moving to a JPE.
      * Matt D indicated that MSCWMO board would also oppose a transition to JPE
      * Karen asked if the policy committee would necessarily meet more often under a JPE
      * Caleb brought a subcontract to the Pine Co board to approve and they expressed concern that there is currently too much paperwork and bureaucracy for relatively small projects. They’d like to see the process become streamlined.
      * Matt M – unless someone is “in charge” projects won’t get accomplished in the LSC. Currently we are functioning like a giant WMO and those traditionally have not worked.
      * Angie – wonders if the policy committee has an implicit assumption that one person will take on all admin and project management for LSC if we become a JPE. That would be more efficient but also risks losing our sense of partnership. That said, the current system is quite inefficient and it would be good to make things more streamlined.
      * Matt – the white paper from the local government roundtable never envisioned that we’d create new entities. The goal was to work in partnership.
      * Mike – our current JPC structure was required by BWSR. Are there efficiencies we can implement to make the current system more efficient?
      * Barbara – from a newcomer’s perspective, it seems like we’re just beginning to get our implementation processes in place and should give the existing structure an opportunity to succeed before we make more changes
      * Matt D – is there consensus among the staff on the steering committee on whether we’d like to be a JPC or JPE?
      * Angie – currently, every project that gets funded through the already-approved WBIF grant goes through 5 rounds of approval – local entity project development, local board approval, LSC subcommittee approval, LSC steering committee approval, and then Chisago SWCD rubber stamp. If we become a JPE, the policy committee would be the final step but may want to debate and deliberate even more on each project and they might carry-over decisions from one month to the next
      * Matt D – does not support becoming a JPE. Seems to have a lot of adde costs without much efficiencies.
      * Craig – he supports moving to a JPE
      * Karen – do we have to become a JPE to avoid going back to local boards for approval every time we make changes in our work plan?
      * Jamie – according to the attorney – yes. Otherwise we are essentially acting as a JPE without officially calling themselves one.
      * Mike – what if we build in contingencies for approved projects to avoid have to go back to local boards as often
      * Jamie – Fran Miron is concerned that a new entity will quickly take on authorities is should not have. He also said we shouldn’t be reluctant to bring changes or projects back to local boards for approval.
      * Stephanie – Miron also suggested that we articulate what is and is not working under our current arrangement
      * Barb – our bylaws and JPC agreement both say that we’ll continue to use an advisory committee in addition to steering committee. The JPC also specifically said that we would reconsider being a JPE vs JPC annually
  + Developing the 2023/24 WBIF grant funds work plan
    - Need to convene a meeting of metro partners, including cities, to determine if we will pool metro and non-metro funds again as we did in 2021-23.
    - It won’t likely work to have this happen at the same time as the March 23 advisory committee meeting. Other people may want to attend who aren’t on the advisory committee and county staff will need to engage their boards before making a decision on whether or not to combine metro and non-metro funds
    - The annual work plan divides the 10-year CWMP into annual goals and then we’ll need to decide which of those activities get funding from the WBIF grant

1. Subcommittee Updates

A1) Agronomy Outreach –

* Jennifer will start next week – yay!

A2,4,5) Urban and Agricultural Projects – Craig Mell and Mike Isensee

* + - Trout Brook project (SWWD) update
    - Nonstructural land management policy: Need to set a policy as a group and determine rates that are uniform across the watershed
      * Policy needs to incorporate street sweeping and nonstructural ag practices
      * Will require a WBIF grant work plan amendment under activity 4

A3) Watershed Education – Barbara Heitkamp

* Put together meet and greet for Jennifer Hahn on March 14th
  + Working to put together a late March small farms workshop and lay groundwork for mid-June large farms workshop
* Lakeshore related initiatives
  + Continuing to build relationship with Jeff Forester from MN Lakes and River Advocates to advance Lake Steward program in LSC
    - Lake Steward program prioritizes training volunteer lakeshore owners who can help their neighbors adopt more stewardship practices (and get a nifty sign)
    - I, Jeff and one of his associates willing to travel and present at spring lake association meetings in the basin - a
  + Adopt a Drain –
    - Can start promotion of program basin wide for individual buy in, but are exploring potential cost options for northern counties so we can access data and measures of success (# of drains adopted, amount of sediment/debris removed)
* Launching blog first week of March – showcasing conservation stories through the LSC – forward your ideas as they come to you!

A6) Wetland Restoration – Becky Wozney

* Will hopefully be getting projects to consider soon

A7) Internal Analyses – Susanna Wilson – Witkowski

* + - The Subcommittee does not recommend funding the applications for Goose, Little, Martin and Typo, and Rush (East and West) Lakes, as they do not meet the threshold guidance in the 2021-2022 BWSR Work Plan (“Internal load evaluation should only occur after external loading is substantially addressed”) and the Project Selection Criteria.
    - The Subcommittee recommends the following threshold guidance further explaining “substantially addressed” external loading in the BWSR Work Plan. The Subcommittee recommends all applicants know they must meet the minimum threshold below to receive funding for external phosphorus analyses.
      * Activity 7 – External Phosphorus Loading Threshold Definitions
        1. Minimum - Minimum external load reduction of 50% toward the TMDL or WRAPs load allocation.
        2. Preferred - Preferred external load reduction demonstrating 80% or greater toward the TMDL or WRAPs load allocation, Or
        3. Demonstrated - Demonstrated effective external load through an alternative or additional study or evaluation.
    - Consider submitting another Call for Projects in September/October.
    - If there are no other interested applicants, recommend to the SC to use the remaining Activity 7 funds for other BWSR grant activities.

A8) Targeting and Prioritization Analyses - Mike Isensee

* Street sweeping and canopy guidance from EOR is expected to be done next week
* WCD is working on SWA protocol updates
* Contributing subwatershed analysis – March 31 due date