

Minutes of the Cedar River 1W1P Policy Committee

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Austin Public Library large meeting room

Policy Cmte. present: Sue Olson, *CRWD* Randy Smith, *Mower SWCD* Pete Van Erkel, *TCWD*
Dan Belshan, *Freeborn County* Paul Heers Jr., *Freeborn SWCD* Steve King, *City of Austin*
Tim Gabrielson, *Mower County* Rhonda Toquam, *Dodge County* David Livingston, *Dodge SWCD*

Staff present: Adam King, *Dodge SWCD* Justin Hanson, *Mower SWCD/CRWD* Dean Schrandt, *Dodge County*
Tim Ruzek, *Mower SWCD* Rachel Wehner, *Freeborn County* Nels Rasmussen, *City of Austin*
Dave Copeland, *BWSR* Mark Schaetzke, *Freeborn SWCD* Jessica Bakken, *Dodge SWCD*
Julie Westerlund, *BWSR* Sue Miller, *Freeborn County Engineer*

Adam King (*Dodge SWCD*) called to order the first meeting of the Cedar River One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) Policy Committee. Introductions were made by all attendees.

One Watershed, One Plan

King introduced Julie Westerlund, coordinator of One Watershed, One Plan for Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR). Westerlund gave an overview on the Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) and its intent to create watershed-based plans for water management. The program aims to align local water planning with state strategies on major watershed boundaries and decrease more than 200 water plans to less than 65. “Prioritize, Target and Measurable” are keys to 1W1P. She explained the 1W1P process and gave updates on other projects.

King discussed the local process that started a year ago in deciding to apply for a BWSR grant for Cedar River 1W1P. Mower and Dodge SWCD staff recently went through the Root River 1W1P pilot project. Creating a 1W1P plan for the Cedar will open state funding opportunities for projects, King stated. Justin Hanson (*Mower SWCD*) noted that various local water plans are up for renewal, making for good timing to do Cedar 1W1P.

Root River One Watershed, One Plan

King gave an update on Root River 1W1P and passed a copy of its final plan completed in December 2016. Documents for Root River 1W1P are on Fillmore SWCD’s website. BWSR’s website offers all completed 1W1P final plans. Cedar River 1W1P information will be on Mower SWCD’s website – www.mowerswcd.org.

Minutes and agenda

King reviewed the Cedar River 1W1P Planning Work Group (PWG) minutes and said several “Action” items on the agenda needed to be changed to “Informational Only” due to no final grant agreement given by BWSR.

ACTION: Dave Livingston (*Dodge SWCD*) made a motion to approve the agenda. Pete Van Erkel (*Turtle Creek Watershed District*) seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Bylaws

King reviewed the Cedar River 1W1P bylaws. Dave Copeland (*BWSR*) said five members will count as a quorum of the 11-member Policy Committee instead of seven due to likely no involvement by Steele County and Steele SWCD. Steele County has a small percentage of land in the Cedar River 1W1P planning area and is significantly involved in the Cannon River 1W1P process now underway.

ACTION: Randy Smith (*Mower SWCD*) made a motion to approve the bylaws. Susan Olson (*Cedar River Watershed District*) seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Election of officers

Chair – King called for nominations for the position of chair.

ACTION: Olson nominated herself for chair. Livingston seconded. **Nomination approved.**

Olson began running the meeting of the Policy Committee as the chair.

Vice chair – Olson called for nominations for the position of vice chair.

ACTION: Tim Gabrielson (*Mower County*) nominated himself for vice chair. **Nomination approved.**

Secretary – Olson called for nominations for the position of secretary.

ACTION: Van Erkel nominated himself for secretary. **Nomination approved.**

Treasurer – Olson called for nominations for the position of treasurer.

ACTION: Olson nominated Paul Heers Jr. (*Freeborn SWCD*) for treasurer. **Nomination approved.**

Grant agreement and budget

King discussed the proposed Cedar River 1W1P budget of \$211,200. The budget needs to be put into a format required by BWSR before the grant agreement can move forward. Copeland said BWSR will establish a grant agreement online once the dollar figure is known; notice then will be given to local staff that an unexecuted grant is available. Staff will bring the Policy Committee the grant agreement for approval to be signed by the fiscal agent, Mower SWCD. That agreement is expected to be brought in late March to the Policy Committee.

Policy Committee member **Dan Belshan** (*Freeborn County*) stated he does not agree with budgeting \$56,000 for administrative work by local staff to spend \$154,00 on a consultant to write the plan. Belshan said he believes no more than \$15,000 should be directed to local staff and other budget numbers can be pared. Hanson said no local match is shown as staff is expected to do typical water-planning work as part of 1W1P. Administrative costs covered by the grant would be for additional work by Dodge SWCD to lead the 1W1P process. Hanson and King gave information on staff workload involved with Root River 1W1P. Dodge SWCD will need to show its work when requesting reimbursements.

Planning Work Group

King discussed the Planning Work Group (PWG) – support staff for the Policy Committee – and how the PWG needs to be set by the Policy Committee. He asked for additions or removals from the PWG. None were made.

Advisory Committee

King discussed the Cedar River 1W1P Advisory Committee – community stakeholders and governmental agency officials – and gave a list of potential members. Policy Committee will need to make appointments to the Advisory Committee. Policy Committee will consider more Advisory members before approving a list.

Consultant contract

King discussed the need to contract with an engineering firm to create Cedar River 1W1P's final plan as local staff do not have time. He explained the selection process and Request For Qualifications (RFQ). Four RFQ's were submitted by WSB & Associates; Houston Engineering; HR Green; and Barr Engineering. PWG scored, ranked and discussed those firms. PWG ranked Barr the highest, noting its extensive work for Cedar River Watershed District. PWG leaders then met with Barr to discuss the work plan and budget. Staff got Barr Engineering to trim its costs by nearly \$30,000. Discussion ensued about Barr's qualifications.

Regular meetings

Policy Committee discussed times and dates for regular meetings and agreed to meet in late March to sign the grant agreement to include in the April 12 meeting packet for fiscal agent Mower SWCD Board of Supervisors.

ACTION: Belshan made a motion for starting meetings at 7:00 AM. No one seconded. **Motion failed.**

ACTION: Livingston made a motion for the next meeting to be at 1:00 PM on Monday, March 27. Belshan seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

ACTION: Van Erkel made a motion for the Austin Public Library to be the preferred meeting location. Steve King (*City of Austin*) seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Policy Committee will aim to meet on the fourth Monday of the month at 1:00 PM at Austin Public Library.

Public kickoff

Adam King said mid-April is the target for doing a public kickoff meeting for Cedar River 1W1P. Smith asked staff to have the kickoff meeting prior to April 15 before farmers get into spring planting.

Adjournment

ACTION: Steve King made a motion to adjourn. Heers seconded the motion. **Meeting adjourned.**

Submitted by, *Tim Ruzek* (*Mower SWCD*)