

<b>Lower Minnesota River West-Comprehensive Watershed Management Partnership</b>	<b>Policy Advisory Committee</b>  Meeting #2 – Minutes	Date: 9/7/2023
		Time: 10:02 AM – 11:36 AM
		Location: USDA Service Center Conference Room 112 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Gaylord, MN 55334

**Attendees:** **Committee Members:** Charles Mathews – McLeod SWCD, Steve Saxton – Sibley County, Kevin Miller – HICWD, Paul Wiemann – Sibley SWCD, Eric Annexstad – Nicollet SWCD, Marie Dranttel – Nicollet County, Doug Krueger – McLeod County  
**Others:** Jack Bushman – Sibley SWCD, Joel Wurscher – Sibley SWCD, Tara O’Brien – Sibley SWCD

## Agenda Items

### Minutes:

1. Call to Order
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM by Committee Chair Wiemann.
2. Review Meeting Agenda, Agenda Additions & Cancellations
  - a. A motion was made by Annexstad and seconded by Miller to accept the agenda as presented. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.
3. Approve Minutes from 6/1/2023
  - a. The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the Policy Committee meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. A motion was made by Mathews and seconded by Saxton to approve the meeting minutes. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.
4. WBIF Financial Update
  - a. Budget
    - i. Wurscher gave the committee an update on the current expenditures and budget for the FY22/23 WBIF grant. Discussion was held on the grant timeline, extension process and the possibility of budget adjustments.
  - b. FY23 WBIF-12, Cover Crop Request
    - i. The committee discussed the proposed contract for 3 years of cover crops on 496.4 acres (FY23 WBIF-12). The project scores 32 out of a potential 35 points. The project will utilize a multi species cover crop mix. The contract will be for \$81,906. The committee discussed the impacts on the budget. Krueger stated the project helps advance plan goals.
    - ii. A motion was made by Krueger and seconded by Saxton to recommend approval of contract FY23 WBIF-12. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.
  - c. Approved & Pending Projects
    - i. The committee reviewed the list of approved & pending WBIF projects. A spreadsheet was distributed detailing the list of projects and their status. The partnership has contracted 2,396 acres of Cover Crops, 1,489 acres of No-till/Strip-till, 1 Terrace, 10 WASCOS, and 2 Grade Stabilization projects.
  - d. FY24-25 WBIF Allocations
    - i. Per Board Order #23-55, BWSR has approved 76.5 million dollars in WBIF grants for fiscal years 2024/2025.

- ii. The Lower Minnesota River West Partnership has been allocated \$1,004,297.
- iii. The money can be requested on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, and could be available as soon as August or September of 2024.
- e. WBIF Supplemental Funding
  - i. BWSR is planning to make some funding available to partnerships. This money will come from implementation groups who have returned part of their allocations. The committee discussed if the LMRW CMWP should pursue this additional funding. A motion was made by Wiemann and seconded by Saxton that in the event of an opportunity to request additional funding, the partnership should ask for between \$100,000 and \$150,000 at the fiscal agent's discretion. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.

#### 5. Education & Outreach Update

- a. O'Brien discussed the ongoing outreach efforts that the partnership is working on.
  - i. 299 cover crop letters were sent out to producers in high priority areas.
  - ii. The partnership was featured in a BWSR Snapshots article.
  - iii. Articles about WBIF funding were published in the Nicollet SWCD & Sibley SWCD newsletters.
  - iv. A cover crop brochure has been put together to help producers learn about how to implement cover crops on their farms.
  - v. A "Coffee Klatch" is being planned for the winter.

#### 6. Cost Share Policy Adjustments

- a. The Local Implementation Workgroup has asked that the committee review several proposed changes to the LMRW CWMP Project and Practice Funding for Watershed Based Implementation Funding. This document is used to guide how the partnership uses WBIF to cost share on projects. The committee was provided with a list of changes to the document. A motion was made by Krueger and seconded by Miller to approve the changes as presented. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.

#### 7. Next Meeting

- a. The next LMRW CWMP Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for January 4<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM. It will be held in the conference room of the USDA Service Center.
- b. A motion was made by Krueger and seconded by Miller to adjourn the meeting at 11:36 AM. Ayes- Annexstad, Dranttel, Krueger, Mathews, Miller, Saxton, Wiemann. Motion carried.

Approved on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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Secretary