

Rainy River-Rainy Lake Watershed Planning Group

Minutes of Meeting 3 of the Policy Committee

Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 at 9:00 am

Location: County Courthouse Board Room
715 4th Street, International Falls, MN 56649

Policy Committee Members Present:

Destry Hell, Koochiching County
Eldon Voigt, Koochiching SWCD
Jenn Lahmayer, City of Ranier
Pete Kalar, City of International Falls

Steering Committee Members Present:

Matthew Gouin, Koochiching County
Pam Tomevi, Koochiching SWCD
Chad Severts, BWSR

Others Present:

Jeff Hrubes, BWSR (teleconference)

Chair Kalar called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

2023/5-1 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to approve the agenda as presented.

Voting yes: Hell, Voigt, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

2023/5-2 Motion by Hell, seconded by Voigt to approve the minutes dated 4/10/2023 as presented.

Voting yes: Hell, Aitchison, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

2023/5-3 Motion by Lahmayer, seconded by Hell to table Advisory Committee discussion until the next meeting.

Voting yes: Hell, Aitchison, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

Tomevi reported the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) notice was emailed on 4/14 2023 to 26 recipients from 11 engineering firms and one (1) response was received. The planning group reviewed the response and proposal from Houston Engineering, Inc (HEI).

2023/5-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to accept the proposal from HEI and authorize Tomevi to enter into a contract for consulting services, with total contract amount not to exceed the bid amount as outlined in the approved budget.

Voting yes: Hell, Aitchison, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

Tomevi reviewed with the planning group the draft notification letter of intent to plan.

2023/5-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Hell to approve the distribution list and notice of intent to plan letter with changes as follows:

Local government units within the Rainy River – Rainy Lake Watershed are initiating a comprehensive watershed management plan for the watershed (see attached map). The Rainy River – Rainy Lake Watershed Planning Partnership was created through a Memorandum of Agreement between Koochiching Soil and Water Conservation District, Koochiching County,

City of International Falls, and the City of Ranier to create a watershed-based plan under the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) program.

You have been identified as a plan review authority and/or stakeholder in this planning area and are invited to submit priority resources and issues that you feel should be addressed in the planning process and resulting plan. Please feel free to include specific opportunities as well as any expectations for plan development. To establish a common language and maximize the ability to incorporate your responses into the planning process, definitions for resources and issues have been provided below:

- **Resource:** Natural features on the landscape that have aesthetic, economic, environmental, or social value. Examples: lakes, rivers and streams, wetlands, soils, and aquatic and terrestrial habitat.
- **Issue:** A factor, stressor or difficulty resulting in an adverse consequence for a resource. For instance, elevated levels of total phosphorus could be an issue affecting a resource (i.e. lakes).

Please submit your responses by **4:30 PM, Friday, July 14, 2023** to

pam.tomevi@co.koochiching.mn.us or

Pam Tomevi
Koochiching SWCD
501 3rd Street, Suite 100
International Falls, MN 56649

There will be a public kickoff meeting scheduled following the 60-day public comment period to review watershed data, present and discuss priority resources and issues identified by plan review authorities and stakeholders, and provide an opportunity to gain further feedback.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Pam Tomevi

Voting yes: Hell, Aitchison, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

2023/5-6 Motion by Hell, seconded by Lahmayer to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 am.

Voting yes: Hell, Aitchison, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

Jenn Lahmayer, Secretary