

Rainy River-Rainy Lake Watershed Planning Group

Minutes of Meeting 7 of the Policy Committee

Date: Monday, October 16, 2023 at 2:00 pm

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



Policy Committee Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Jolen Simon (Koochiching SWCD)

Rachel Olm (Houston Engineering, Inc.)

Jeff Hrubes (BWSR)

Chair Kalar called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

2023/10-1 Motion by Lahmayer, seconded by Voigt to approve the agenda as presented.

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

2023/10-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to approve the minutes dated 8/21/2023 with a correction to motion 2023/8-3 (time changed from a.m. to p.m.).

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

2023/10-3 Motion by Lahmayer, seconded by Voigt to approve the financial report dated 8/31/2023 as presented.

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

Public Kickoff Meeting

Olm presented an overview of the public kickoff meeting from September 7th, 2023.

- The results of the mapping and priority issues voting were shown.
 - Order of issues of importance by vote: Surface Water Quality, Water Quantity and Hydrology, Habitat and Land Use Pressures, and then Groundwater.

- Survey: No survey results have been received as of today.
 - The group will do a push via social media, email, and newspaper.

2023/10-4 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer authorizing staff to spend up to \$1500 to promote the public kickoff meeting survey.

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

Advisory Committee Meetings

The Policy Committee reviewed the finalize roster for Advisory Committee members including the following suggested names for public participation:

- Mike Hanson (Rainy/Rapid Board Member), Steve Earley (Little Fork/Rat Root Board Member) Mike Heibel (Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club)

2023/10-5 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to approve the invitation list with the above additions for membership on the Advisory Committee.

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

Olm reviewed a standard meeting format for topic-based meetings and presented the following draft resource groupings and meeting schedule:

- Tentative resource grouping and meeting schedule:
 - Water Quality – November 2023
 - Water Quantity and Hydrology – December 2023
 - Groundwater – January 2024
 - Habitat and Forest – February 2024

Plan Priorities

Olm reviewed the current draft resource issues and asked for feedback on how best to group them together.

The Policy Committee agreed that the current draft groupings were good and instructed Pam and Rachel to create draft issue statements for each resource concern and bring them to the group at the next meeting for review.

Olm provided an overview of the process for resource prioritization and reviewed items for vigilance, protection, enhancement, and restoration.

Introduction to Plan Section 3: Priority Issues

Olm provided an example of how this section will look. The actual section for the Rainy River-Rainy Lake 1W1P will not be written until the topic meetings have been completed, sometime after March 2024.

Action Items and Next Steps:

- HEI/SWCD
 - Leave survey open and promote
 - Doodle poll for November and December Advisory Committee Meetings
 - Create new draft issue statements to bring to topic meetings. Once final draft is approved at Advisory Committee, Policy Committee will review/approve
 - Next Policy Committee Meeting Discussion:
 - Policy Committee would like to meet after 2 of the 4 Advisory Committee topic meetings (January 2024) date to be determined.

General Business:

Survey – Setting to change for anyone to join, not just Google members.

Confirm Next Meeting Location/date and adjourn

2023/10-6 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 p.m.
Voting yes: Voigt, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.

Jenn Lahmayer, Secretary