

**Rainy River-Rainy Lake Watershed Planning Group
Minutes of Meeting 6 of the Policy Committee**

Date: Monday, August 21, 2023 at 2:00 pm

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 (Teleconference)

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

**2023/8-1 Motion by Lahmayer, seconded by Voigt to approve the agenda with addition.
Voting yes: Hell, Voigt, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.**

**2023/8-2 Motion by Voigt, seconded by Lahmayer to approve the minutes dated
7/17/2023 as presented.
Voting yes: Hell, Voigt, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.**

Plan Issues

- Review/Discuss requested changes
 - Olm presented an overview of the planning process including draft priority issues, goals, and action items.
 - Current Priority Issue Categories:
 - Water quantity and hydrology
 - Water quality
 - Habitat and land use pressures
 - Groundwater

The group discussed potential edits to the categories including the possibility of combining some of the sub issues to simplify and/or redefine main categories after public meeting input.

Verbal approval was given to move forward with the public meeting as outlined and discussed. Olm presented a graphic from the Rainy-Rapid 1W1P with resource categories/narratives under each main category. The group decided that this is a good way to move forward.

Land and Water Resources Narrative

This document is meant to be easy for people to read as an introduction to the planning process. The group reviewed this section as a group with Olm and made edits as discussed. This is something that, once edited, will be printed and available for review at the upcoming public kick-off event.

Additional discussion included the addition of a “Human History” section highlighting original inhabitants and voyageurs.

Public Kickoff Meeting:

The group reviewed the tentative timeline and agenda; Agency staff and booth content were discussed. Supporting materials will include plotter size maps showing subwatersheds, land cover, altered streams and impaired waters, and groundwater sources.

The group reviewed the draft meeting planning document; Tomevi and Olm will finalize event details.

Action Items and Next Steps:

The Advisory Committee roster will be finalized after the public kick-off meeting.

Shorewood Erosion: Voigt discussed a property purchased behind the bowling alley in International Falls which is now being cleared and will be subdivided. There is concern about future erosion.

General Business:

Tomevi reviewed the new website that is being developed for the 1W1P.

Confirm Next Meeting Location/date and adjourn

The Public Kick-off Meeting will be held on September 7th, 2023 in the Ranier Community Building from 4:00-6:00 p.m. The next Policy Committee meeting will be held on Monday, October 9th at 9:00 am in the Koochiching County Boardroom.

**2023/8-3 Motion by Hell, seconded by Lahmayer to adjourn the meeting at 3:52 p.m.
Voting yes: Hell, Voigt, Lahmayer, Kalar. Motion carried.**

Jenn Lahmayer, Secretary