*Itasca County Water Plan Implementation Committee*

*Regular Meeting Minutes:* **April 10, 2019**

SWCD Conference Room, Grand Rapids, MN

Chair Norman Miranda opened the meeting at 9:33 AM.

**WPIC members present:** Norman Miranda, Dick Lacher, Norley Hansen, Don Klandee, Mike Oja, Lester Kachinske, Tom Nelson, Dan Butterfield, Harold Goetzman, Cal Saari (SWCD Board;), and *ex officio* SWCD Manager Andy Arens

**1) Agenda**. **Motion** made to approve the agenda with two additions: a) St Louis County and 1W1P watershed planning, and b) Envirothon, by Dan with second by Norley; **Approved**.

**2)** **Minutes.** **Motion** to approve the minutes, with additions after-the-meeting (in italics) from the February 12, 2019 meetings by Norley, second by Dan; **Approved**.

**3) Status of County Water Plan within 1W1P.** It was noted that the Itasca County Board barely approved their participation (3-2) in the Upper Mississippi River Headwaters (UMRH) 1W1P, which will require cooperation among several counties. Principle reasons thought to be loss of control, and resulting confusion with multiple LGUscompeting for priorities with shared funding for entire watershed. The required collaboration will also result in considerably more work and travel for negotiations with partners. This hesitancy may well repeat for each of the several 1W1P agreements with sharing counties. Dick Lacher, together with Harold and Patty Dziuk will be on the UMRH Advisory committee.

There was a lengthy discussion concerning the relationship between the 1W1P planning and our traditional Water Plan; this has implications for the role of WPIC in the future. BWSR prefers to emphasize only the 1W1P program and not the county water plans. The Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) for improving the Water Plan, begun in 2015, has apparently been abandoned. Andy will consult with Chad Severts. It was the consensus of the WPIC members that our local Water Plan still has considerable value as an umbrella that can tie together the various watershed plans for the benefit of Itasca County.

**4) Review of Water Plan Implementation and Priorities.** The committee reviewed Implementation portion of the Water Plan. Work on the 1W1P will hit many of the Goal and Actions described therein. Because of the extensions provided to the deadline for completion, together with the introduction of the alternative approach with 1W1P, the document has become engrossed. The final should be much slimmer. Given the above discussion on the value of the Water Plan, timely review and its updating will be continued, with emphasis on one or two sections per meeting. It was suggested that Dan Swenson be invited to discuss the Land Use and Development Priority Concern. County Commissioners will also be encouraged to attend WPIC meetings.

**5) St Louis County/Watershed 1W1P (added item).** Itasca County has only 2 ½% of the St Louis River Watershed, and thus not required to participate in that 1W1P. Similarly, St Louis County has a small portion of the Mississippi River-Grand Rapids Watershed. It was the consensus of the Committee that we nevertheless stay in the loop and receive data. Moreover, Kim will be testing two lakes in that watershed (she also tests lakes over the border of Koochiching County). However, we should assure the County Board that we are not expecting to fully participate in this 1W1P. A similar situation exists for the Little Fork and Red Lake Watersheds.

**6) Sampling/Assessment Program of 2019**. Kim has been out on the waters already as the 2019 Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) program begins. It was noted that MPCA has strict requirements for the testing, both regarding protocol and reporting parameters, and will not accept data otherwise provided, despite the value.

**7) Wild Rice / Sulfate Task Force Update.** Norm has been down to St Paul to lobby for better sulfate standards for wild rice, a technically difficult and politically charged issue. The standard is not possible to meet in some locations. The Task Force will be terminated and replaced with a stewardship committee.

**8) Envirothon Funding (added item).** Tim Frits is coordinating SWCD involvement. They have requested $300 for travel expenses, etc. There is $200 left over and available from last year.  **Motion** from Lester, second from Norm, to provide $100 more from the Lakes and Rivers Fund, plus the $200. **Motion Approved**.

**9) WPIC *Per Diem* Rate.** Mike has done some research on other counties’ *per diem* rates. Itasca is in the middle, and no increase will be requested.

**10) Adjournment.** **Moved** by Dan, second by Lester at 10:55; **Approved**.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Tom Nelson, WPIC Secretary

**Next Meetings:**

Regular WPIC meeting: June 11, location TBA (SWCD is moving from its present location)

Mississippi Cleanup day: May 9

Youth Summit: May 21

County Fair: August 15ff.

Remaining 2019 WPIC: August 13, October 8, December 10