*Itasca County Water Plan Implementation Committee*

*Regular Meeting Minutes:* **August 13, 2019**

***New*** SWCD Conference Room, Grand Rapids, MN

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

**WPIC members present:** Norman Miranda, Dick Lacher, Don Klandee, Lester Kachinske, Tom Nelson, Dan Butterfield, Harold Goetzman, Bob Lindahl Mike Oja, and *ex officio* SWCD Manager Andy Arens, Specialist Kim Yankowiak, and Consultant Chad Severts (BWSR)

**1) Agenda**. **Motion** made to approve the agenda with one addition (GRACF grant opportunities) by Dick with second by Harold; **Approved**.

**2)** **Minutes.** **Motion** to approve the minutes by Lester, second by Dan; **Approved**.

**3) Mississippi Headwaters-Grand Rapids WRAPS/1W1P Update: Andy and Chad.** Mississippi Headwaters-Grand Rapids watershed kickoff meetings at Timberlake had a smaller turnout than hoped (30 folks, many on the clock), but the discussion was productive. Groundwater survey of the area would be helpful, but mostly benefit in this region to well drillers and diagnostic studies. DNR geological atlas program is presently booked up from demand in agricultural areas where information is more crucial. There is 25 years of data at the Dept. of Health where well drillers report water level and provide sample. No follow up after initial report. Wellhead Protection programs are distinct from this, and involve only immediate area.

**4) 1W1P Presentation—Chad Severts.** Chad presented a power-point on the 1w1p committees and process along with some statistics on the Upper Mississippi Headwaters watershed. The importance of clean water to the local economy was discussed along with the politics of county involvement within shared watershed. Easement seem to be one challenge, together with “loss of control.” The tribes are only peripherally involved. 97% of the water here meets standards. The meaning, history and applicably of “standards” was challenged; old standard can be updated during the process.  **“**Develop—Prioritize—Target—Measure…” is the basis for Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans, which applies the 1W1P process and replaces the individual County Water Plans. There are 5 pilot watersheds to get started. Work plans required before funding, but can be compensated. No more random acts of conservation. Efforts underway to change the funding priorities of WRAPS to emphasize Protection over Restoration, as more cost effective. This would be a boon for northern watersheds.

<https://bwsr.state.mn.us/one-watershed-one-plan>

**5) Itasca County Water Plan integration with 1W1P.** Discussion of how to accomplish water planning within alternative scenarios: a) full blown local plan update (beyond just amendments); b) request another extension waiting for 1W1P data with tweaks to present plan regarding new initiatives with amended implementation schedule; c) request extension without further updates or amendments, waiting for 1W1P to come on line (no fall back if county commissioners do not approve the 1W1P program). WPIC members prefer b) or c). Chad will check on what BWSR would approve. All three major watershed are past the first WRAPS cycle. Exact funding for watersheds forthcoming; planning funding has not been adequate. 2025 is target date to have the 1W1P in place, minus the holdouts.

**6) “*We Are Water*” Exhibit at Reif Center.** Exhibit up until September 16.

**7a) Grand Rapids Area Community Fund opportunities.** Gracf has sent out flyer notifying charitable groups to apply for grants. WPIC advises two such funds and would approve any requests.

**7b) Miscellaneous Sharing.** Blandin Foundation held a symposium on drinking water, with a series of meeting to assess drinking water status around state. Keewatin has the worst in our area. Municipal sanitation also an issue, with difficulties to garner cooperation. The Little Rock Lake drawdown (Benton County) is underway to clean up what has been a shallow impoundment for a defunct paper mill, and now a residential lake.

**8) Adjournment.** At 11:35am, by Richard and Butter.

Tom Nelson, Secretary to the WPIC

Next meetings: October 8, December 10, 2019