*Itasca County Water Plan Implementation Committee*

*Regular Meeting Minutes:* **July 16, 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, Norley Hansen, Don Klandee, , Lester Kachinske, Tom Nelson, Dan Butterfield, Harold Goetzman, Bob Lindahl and *ex officio* SWCD Manager Andy Arens with Kim Yankowiak

**1) Agenda**. **Motion** made to approve the agenda by Dick with second by Norley; **Approved**.

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

**3) Mississippi Headwaters-Grand Rapids WRAPS/1W1P Overview.** The MPCA has opened a public comment period for the watershed through August 14, 2019. A summary description and instructions for comments can be found here: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw8-58m.pdf> WRAPS Open houses were held on July 10 in two locations. Several new water bodies were added to the TMDL list, while Prairie Lake was taken off. Shallow lake present a challenge for water quality. Discussion of the TMDL threshold number for Phosphorus (30 pp/b) as too low, given the natural background is already very close to that number.

**4) Sampling / Assessment Program Update**. Kim’s sampling continues including one on the county border (but within the watershed). Some technical glitches with contract partners have added other sites temporarily to Kim’s load. The lakes in Grand Rapids municipality are being considered (along with possibly organizing a city lakes association).

**5) County Water Plan versus Watershed planning (1W1P).** We are getting started early to be sure to make the deadline of 3/31/2022. Long discussion on the options to integrate the old county borders water plan and the new county collaborative watershed borders. Itasca County commissioners seem to balk at going full-in with the 1W1P assessments and project funding, fearing hidden agendas by rival counties, loss of local control, and being shut out of funding. Without participation, such will be the self-imposed result. There is a Policy Board for officials (county and SWCD), a Steering Committee (staff), and an Advisory Committee (stakeholder citizens, including Patty and Harold Dziuk presently). TMDLs show impairment and thus need for project funding, available from several governmental sources; the 1W1P approach will actually be less competitive than in the past between counties. Protection strategies, such as granting easements will be an important part of WRAPS/1W1P in the northern parts of the state; some commissioners are worried about diminished tax base. Little Fork watershed might be combined with Big Fork, but problems foreseen with this. BWSR, with holds the funding for water strategies, does not really care about the county plans, but commissioners do. WPIC seeks to honor both with 1W1P cooperation among other counties, while still providing a County Water Plan that serves as an umbrella document outlining the various watershed efforts. By the time of the 2022 deadline for our County Water Plan, several of the 1W1P processes will not be completed. AIS is ***not*** considered an impairment within the 1W1P program (it is under our County Water Plan). See attached documents.

**Motion** from Tom, second from Lester to recommend support and participation of the 1W1P program in Itasca County to our commissioners, as transition into the new watershed based approach. **Motion Approved**.

**6) Chloride Water Quality Standard Update.** There has been a variance requested by a small municipality to exceed the chloride limits for wastewater treatment (see attachment). Improved science and technology are being sought to help alleviate the salting problems both as input from various year-round sources, and the treatment. Standards for nitrogen and sulfide also under consideration by the MPCA.

**7) Review of Implementation Plan Goals and Actions.** The WPIC did a short review of the categories.

**Adjourn:** 11:08am

Upcoming events: *We Are Water Minnesota*: Reif Center gallery, Aug 2- Sept 16.

Next meetings: August 13, October 8 and December 10th, 2019