

Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

MINUTES

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Virtual Meeting/Held Via Zoom* (computer/smartphone/tablet etc.)

<https://youtu.be/fnnj6t63M5Y>

A VIDEO RECORDING OF THE MEETING IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE NRPC YOUTUBE CHANNEL (Link above). THE WRITTEN MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING. MOTIONS ARE AS STATED. MINUTES WILL BE SUBJECT TO CORRECTION BY THE COUNCIL. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE RECORDED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Council Members: Lindsey Wight (Q), Ted Sedell (Q), Barry Lampke (Q), Beth Torpey (Q), Kent Henderson (Q), Allaire Diamond (Q), Dave Allerton (Q), Dan Seeley (Q), Mel Auffredou (Q), Bridget Butler

(Q= towards quorum)

Staff: Dean Pierce, Sara Gratz

Others present: July Medina-Triana, Karen Bates, Jim Pease (and Jim's Otter Pilot AI), Caroline Foley, and Hannah Mahar

1. Welcome and Introductions

Lindsey Wight opened the meeting as chair at 11:02 am.

2. Meeting protocols

Lindsey went over meeting protocols.

3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any

Mel Auffredou announced that has a project application that is up for review, and will need to recuse herself when that goes to vote.

4. Review/adjust and approve agenda

No adjustments were made.

5. Approval of Minutes

Dan motioned to approve the minutes and Kent seconded. Motion carried.

6. Public comment not related to items on agenda

No public comments were made.

7. New rep or alternate seating (if required)

No new reps or alternates were seated.

8. Application for funding-Round 4

a. Marsh Brook Floodplain Restoration

Mel gave a presentation on the Marsh Brook Restoration Project application that the Franklin County NRCD submitted. The site of the project is near the mouth of Marsh Brook at Lake Carmi State Park and has full support from the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

The application is seeking approval for the preliminary design phase of the project, which would help determine the best approach moving forward. The options they are considering include implementing strategic woody additions, or floodplain lowering. They are also expecting to implement streambank stabilization in one area, and are expecting that they will need to have a historic and archeological review conducted. The annual phosphorus reduction from this project is estimated to be around 16.5 kg per year and the cost effectiveness is estimated to be between \$3,776 and \$8,622 per kilogram.

Discussions followed pertaining to methods for estimating costs, permitting requirements, and questions related to applying for funding.

Kent motioned to approve the project and Allaire seconded. Mel recused. Motion carried.

9. Confirming of form of Policy on Budget Adjustments

Dean presented the policy for budget adjustments that was adopted at the previous meeting and asked the Council to take action on it again because the previous version did not have the language written in policy format. Dan motioned to accept the policy and Allaire seconded. Motion carried.

10. Phosphorus Crediting

Dean gave an update on estimating phosphorus credits, sharing DEC's plans to establish methods for calculating them on other project types, such as river corridor easements, forest lands sector projects, conservation easements on agricultural lands, and wetland protection and restorations. Currently, these project types are ineligible for CWSP funding. Dean recommended that anyone with questions should reach out to him or DEC.

11. Clean Water Network Summit

Dean gave a reminder about the Clean Water Network Summit and encouraged Council members to sign up if they plan to attend. He also shared that it was originally planned to be a hybrid event but now it is strictly in-person.

A short discussion followed, expressing disappointment that the event no longer had a hybrid option, noting that travel can be a barrier to some who would like to attend.

12. Updates and Conclusion

Dean shared that DEC has released new guidance on project development and suggested that it could be a topic for an upcoming meeting.

a. Input on Cost effectiveness threshold

Dean gave an update on the input that other CWSPs are giving to DEC regarding a cost effectiveness threshold. He shared that the consensus is generally that it is still too early to make that determination because the CWSPs need more experience with processing applications.

b. Adoption of completed projects

Dean shared that the CWSP are waiting for DEC guidance on the adoption of completed projects and suggested that the Council will possibly adopt a policy on the subject after the DEC guidance is released.

Lindsey called the meeting to an end at 12:15 pm. Allaire motioned to adjourn and Ted seconded. Motion carried.