

Missisquoi Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

MINUTES

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

11:00 AM-1:00 PM

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

Meeting video posted at <https://youtu.be/qG8aFFD5t9k>

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), Dan Seeley (Q), Mel Auffredou (Q Alternate counting), Dave Allerton (Q Alternate non counting as rep was present), Bridget Butler (Q Alternate non counting as rep was present)

(Q= towards quorum unless otherwise indicated)

Staff: Dean Pierce

Others present: Ellen Fox, July Medina-Triana, Karen Bates, Jim Pease (and Jim's Otter Pilot AI)

1. Welcome and Introductions

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

2. Meeting protocols

Lindsey reviewed meeting protocols.

3. Conflict of interest declarations, if any

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

4. Review/adjust and approve agenda

The agenda was approved by consent.

5. Approval of Minutes

Ted Sedell made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Dan Seeley. The motion was approved.

6. Public comment not related to items on agenda

Ted Sedell asked about the process for quarterly reporting in relation to invoicing. He also inquired about streamlining the reporting process. Dean Pierce responded that CWSP is attempting to keep the process simple and does allow progress reporting as part of its newly developed invoicing form.

7. New rep or alternate seating (if required)

No new reps or alternates were seated.

8. Budget Adjustment Requests

Dean Pierce indicated that, at this time, there were no budget adjustment requests to report or consider. He then shared the experience of the Lamoille Basin Water Quality Council, which recently had its first instance of a budget adjustment request report.

9. Brainstorming session /discussion of obstacles to project advancement

Dean Pierce introduced the topic by highlighting the opportunity presented by the upcoming Clean Water Network Summit. He suggested that the session could serve as a platform for the Basin Council to share insights on the project development process with a wider audience. The aim was to not only present dry facts about project numbers and cost-effectiveness but to delve deeper into the processes and developments, highlighting what's working and what's not.

Dean proposed a brainstorming session for Basin Council members to discuss the project development process. The aim was to identify successful elements worth retaining, potential areas for improvement, and suggestions for future actions. The session was designed to be informal yet structured.

Participants discussed challenges related to project identification and the capacity to carry out projects. There was a consensus on the need for more resources dedicated to exploring potential projects and ensuring organizations have the capacity to implement them. Ideas for funding mechanisms and structural adjustments were proposed to address these challenges.

The discussion touched upon the complexities of funding and executing culvert projects, especially distinguishing between town and private road culverts. The conversation highlighted the need for clear guidelines and potential for funding to support small-scale, impactful culvert projects as part of larger restoration efforts.

10. Potential changes for Round 5 Call for projects

Dean Pierce shared updates and clarifications regarding the upcoming call for project submissions, scheduled to open on April 17th, with a deadline of May 22nd.

Dean highlighted that the call for applications form had been slightly updated to ensure clarity and ease of application for potential project proposers. This included corrections to the eligible project types and fixing broken links to the funding policy.

One significant change was the increased emphasis on the importance of including cultural resource assessments in project planning and budgeting. This was identified as an area that previously caught applicants by surprise, either by not budgeting for it or underestimating the costs involved. The updated call for projects documentation now highlights this requirement more prominently to ensure applicants are well-informed and prepared.

Dean emphasized that the CWSP remains open to receiving applications for all stages of project development. This openness aims to encourage a wide range of project proposals, from initial assessments to full-scale implementation projects, provided they align with eligible activities.

Dean concluded that while the current call for projects does not limit the types of applications that can be submitted, there is openness to potentially focusing on specific project types in future rounds if deemed necessary. This would be based on identified priorities or strategic needs to address specific water quality challenges.

There was limited discussion.

11. Clean Water Network Summit

Dean Pierce sought to gauge the council members' attendance plans by requesting a show of hands. Some members, like Bridget Butler, were undecided due to possible inclement weather.

Karen Bates offered to carpool, suggesting she could meet participants at designated locations with her well-equipped vehicle for snowy conditions. Karen provided her email for those interested in this offer, emphasizing community support for those attending the summit.

Dean discussed the prospect of using slides during the summit's "slam" portion, where each basin or council could share updates or highlights. He expressed concerns about the effectiveness of using visual aids in a large room, potentially with a small screen, and

how it might not serve the intended purpose if the audience couldn't clearly view the slides. Dean planned to consult further with the Chair and Vice-Chair on whether to proceed with slides, indicating a flexible approach to their presentation strategy.

12. Updates and Conclusion

Dean Pierce noted Karen Bates's request for a future agenda item dedicated to discussing the process of creating Project IDs. He also introduced BWQC members to a relatively new feature on the website – a pre-qualification list of consultants and contractors. The list is intended to aid project proposers in identifying qualified firms for design and implementation work, including those capable of conducting cultural resource assessments. Dean then reminded members about the upcoming timeline for receiving applications under Round 5.

Allaire Diamond made the motion to end the meeting, with Ted Sedell seconding. The motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30.