



## Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission

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### TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

#### Minutes

February 15, 2022

**1. CALL TO ORDER.** A Technical Advisory Committee meeting of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order via Zoom at 1:40 p.m., Thursday, January 20, 2022, by Amy Juntunen.

Present: Mat Danzl, Hakanson-Anderson, Greenfield, Independence, and Medina; Laura Rescorla and Nick Olson, Minnetrista; Kris Guentzel and Paul Stewart, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Andrew Vistad, Hakanson-Anderson; and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

Also Present: Joe Baker, Independence; Caitlin Cahill, Maple Plain; and Pat Wulff, Medina.

**2. AGENDA.** The agenda\* was approved as presented.

**3. Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF).**

**a. Convene Process.\*** The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) biennially appropriates funding for a program called Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF). The WBIF funding is allocated to targeted watersheds to be distributed according to guidelines agreed upon by the eligible entities in the allocation area (“the Partnership”). The BWSR Board approved allocations for fiscal year 2022, including \$159,223 to the Pioneer-Sarah Creek allocation area, which will become available July 1, 2022. A minimum 10% match is required.

The BWSR Funding Policy for the program specifies that each Partnership will include one decision-making representative from each watershed district and/or watershed management organization, soil and water conservation district, county with a current groundwater plan, and up to two decision-making representatives from municipalities within the allocation area. For the Pioneer-Sarah Creek allocation area, that would include the commission, Hennepin County in its capacity as the county SWCD, and up to two cities. Other parties may participate in discussions regarding the use of the funding, but only the decision-making representatives may make the final recommendation to BWSR. The city and watershed representatives may be TAC members or Commissioners.

Danzl noted that the City of Independence has approved his time to act as a city representative. Guentzel or Stewart will act as the County representative. Juntunen will solicit member cities for a second city representative.

Staff recommends that the TAC and Commissioners start thinking about their priorities and objectives for the funding. Activities eligible for funding span a very wide range of options, but all must be focused on prioritized and targeted cost-effective actions with *measurable water quality results*. Funding is not limited to capital projects; anything in the Third Generation Plan’s Implementation Plan may be eligible as long as its end goal is the protection and improvement of water quality. The Implementation Plan included several broad areas, including:

Greenfield • Independence • Loretto • Maple Plain • Medina • Minnetrista

\*Included in meeting packet.

1. Keeping the Rules and Standards up to date
2. Maintaining a robust monitoring program
3. Implementing an education and outreach program
4. Implementing TMDL management actions
5. Completing subwatershed assessments and follow-up implementation cost share
6. Matching grants
7. Maintaining an ongoing and periodically updated capital improvement program

(CIP)

The Partnerships may choose to award the funds to one high-priority project or make numerous awards for varying objectives.

Along with designating the required representatives, the secondary purpose of this discussion is to provide some broad guidance and direction to the designees to consider during the Convene meeting. For example, the Commissioners may want to make it known to the Partnership their funding preference.

The Partnerships will need to complete some procedural details and then discuss the desired objectives and outcomes from the use of the funding before determining how fundable activities will be solicited and selected. Recommended activities approved by BWSR may then be detailed in a work plan starting approximately June 2022. Funding would be available July 1, 2022, following submittal and approval of the work plan. Recommended Convene meeting objectives include:

1. Choose a decision-making process.
2. Decide how to select activities for funding. Note that partnerships may also want to choose funding targets for various categories (e.g., projects, studies, education).
3. Partnerships may select activities by:
  - a. Developing a list of potential activities from eligible plans,
  - b. Selecting a few priority waterbodies (lake, streams) and/or groundwater areas to prioritize activities,
  - c. Using agreed-upon criteria to select activities, or
  - d. Using a process approved by the BWSR Central Region Manager.
4. Select the highest priority, targeted, measurable, and eligible activities to be submitted to BWSR as a budget request.
5. Confirm which entity will serve as grantee and/or fiscal agent for each selected activity and decide on the source of the 10% required match.
  - b. **CIP Review.\*** The CIP in the Fourth Generation Plan was reviewed and updated to show completed projects, proposed 2022 projects, and shifting in some funding years. Juntunen will provide an updated CIP for the March meeting with the detailed changes.
  - c. **Recommendations for Funding / Solicitation of Projects.** Juntunen will send the CIP application form to the member cities. Recommendations for funding will be made by the Partnership.

There is no current cost-share policy for small landowner projects such as wildlife ponds. The Commission may choose to pursue creation of such a policy and require agreements for funded projects.

4. **BUDGET REVIEW.\*** Vlach and TAC members were requested to review the approved 2022 budget for monitoring, and be prepared in March to discuss 2023 budget needs to complete TMDL updates, alum feasibility studies, monitoring, etc.

5. **MS4 PERMIT / WATERSHED RULES COMPLIANCE.\*** Juntunen noted that other local watersheds are making some changes to their Rules to comply with the new MS4 permit requirements. Vistad will review the rules and return with a proposal for any changes.

6. **WATER APPROPRIATIONS PERMITTING.** In 2021 the Commission received a landowner request for a water appropriations permit. The Commission has purview of water appropriations permitting below DNR permit requirements. Some rule changes are needed and the permit application needs to be updated. Vistad will review Commission rules, the application, and statues re pumping from wetlands. and bring proposed changes to the next meeting. The application and appropriate information will also need to be added to the website as an educational item.

7. **FEE SCHEDULE CHANGES.\*** Vistad noted that the Project Review Application and fee schedule were confusing to applicants because they still refer to WCA fees, which are now within City purview, along with a few other items. The TAC recommended striking all references to wetlands and wetland escrows, as well as adding a line to note "city authorization."

8. **PROJECT REVIEW APPLICATION CHANGE.\*** The check boxes referring to wetland delineation, determination, exemption, replacement plan, and banking can be removed, as well as two "other" check boxes. A check box for erosion and sediment control should be added. A city review signature line was added to ensure the project has gone to the city prior to coming to the Commission. Juntunen will work with Vistad on the changes and discuss adding water quality calculations to the application.

9. **DRAFT 2022 WORK PLAN.\*** TAC members will review and bring suggestions to the next meeting.

10. **WELLHEAD PROTECTION PLAN.\*** The Commission's wellhead map was last updated in 2016. TAC members will review for any changes within their cities.

11. **OTHER BUSINESS.**

a. Guentzel noted that the Pioneer-Sarah Creek technical expense is under budget and inquired whether some engineering projects in the watershed that the County is working on could be **outsourced to Vistad** at the Commission's expense. Juntunen noted that any expenditure request would need to be presented to the Commissioners at a regular meeting.

b. The **next TAC meeting** is scheduled for March 7, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. and will be held online again via Zoom link <https://zoom.us/j/845974640>.

12. **ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, motion by Vistad, second by Danzl to adjourn. *Motion carried unanimously.* The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Juntunen  
Administrator  
AAJ:tim

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