



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Next Generation Plan Steering Committee Meeting Notes

4:30 p.m ~ Tuesday February 11, 2014
Golden Valley City Hall

Feb 11th Attendees: Committee Chair Linda Loomis; Commissioners Michael Welch and Clint Carlson; Alternate Commissioner Pat Crough; TAC members Jeff Oliver, Derek Asche and Joe Fox; Engineers Karen Chandler and Jim Herbert; Administrator Laura Jester

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Loomis called the meeting to order at approximately 4:35 p.m.

2. Approve Meeting Notes from January 27, 2014 Plan Steering Committee Meeting

There were no suggested changes to the notes from the January 27, 2014 meeting. Consensus to accept the notes as presented.

3. Review Draft Table of Priority Water Body Classification and Applicable Water Quality Standards

Engineer Chandler presented the draft table of proposed classifications and water quality standards for priority waterbodies. She noted the standards were simple and based on existing or proposed State standards. There was discussion and it was noted that the draft watershed plan also includes a non-degradation policy so if a waterbody is already meeting standards, but begins to decline, action would be taken. The point was made that the Commission and cities know more about current and potential water quality of individual waterbodies. There was also discussion about existing vs. State proposed water quality standards. That distinction will be made in the table, which could be altered once standards are fully promulgated in law.

4. Review Re-revised Draft Policies for Water Quality and Flooding and Rate Control

Policies #1 - #3 are okay as written.

Policy #4: A portion of the draft policy will be re-written to: "The BCWMC will not pursue water quality improvement projects in which the primary benefit to be achieved is recreational, nor manage nor manage increased growths of aquatic vegetation resulting from improved water quality."

Additionally, a discussion with the Commission is warranted and will be included on the next workshop agenda regarding management of aquatic invasive species.

Policy #5: okay as written

Policy #6: Administrator Jester presented a table listing current CIP project costs that are eligible and ineligible for reimbursement by the Commission to cities. Currently costs ineligible for

reimbursement include property acquisition and easement acquisition. Oliver and Asche noted that some projects cannot happen if acquisitions cannot be made and those costs are usually too much for the city to handle. Therefore, the project cannot move forward. Similarly, clean-up of contaminated soils and groundwater remediation currently cannot be reimbursed and could also stop a project for lack of funding. (And, contaminated soils can sometimes be a surprise.) There was consensus that the Commission should know the total project cost to determine if the project cost is worth the pollutant removal benefit.

Commissioner Welch indicated he was uncomfortable with the Commission paying such large sums for projects they do not explicitly direct.

There was a long and detailed discussion within the group regarding the fundamental way the Commission implements projects. Currently, the Commission agrees to include projects in their CIP and asks the County to levy taxes on their behalf each year to implement the projects. Then the Commission enters into agreements with the city where the project is located to perform the feasibility study, design the project, and install the project. The city then requests reimbursement from the Commission. Commissioner Welch does not believe the Commission knows enough about the projects, how they are constructed, and how they turn out.

There was consensus that more and better communication is needed to help Commissioners understand the projects and for the Commission Engineer to be more involved in reviewing feasibility studies and reviewing the project results at the end. Administrator Jester noted that she, the Commission Engineer, and city staff have been working on improving this process already and that Commissioners will be asked to discuss changes to the process at the February and March Commission meetings. She acknowledged there was a very different structure/process for CIP implementation that could be implemented, but thought there was enough room for improvement within the current system.

Oliver noted that the Commission *is* the cities – there would be no Commission if it weren't for a JPA among all cities. Oliver noted that the Commission will never own the projects; the cities are responsible for their long-term maintenance. Asche noted that perhaps more Commissioner involvement with the projects from the beginning (such as attending meetings with residents) could help Commissioners feel more comfortable with the projects and have a better understanding of the projects. Welch admitted a Commission-led CIP implementation process would be more time consuming for Commission staff. He reiterated that Commissioners are office holders responsible for efficiently and effectively spending about \$1 million dollars per year. They need more information about the projects being implemented. He indicated his solution wasn't necessarily a completely different system and noted that the current process is improving.

For now, the group agreed to keep the current list of eligible project costs, with the exception of wetland mitigation or replacement which would be moved to the other column in the table. The other column in the table will be titled "Other project costs that will be considered for whole or partial reimbursement on a project by project basis."

Policy #7: Okay as written.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m. and was to resume on February 24, 2014. However, there were not enough committee members present on 2/24 to hold a meeting. Next meeting scheduled for March 10th at 4:30 p.m.