

**Murray County Local Water Management Plan Meeting
Minutes September 27, 2018**

The Murray County Local Water Management Plan Task Force held a meeting on Thursday, September 27, 2018, at 9:00 am in the Courts Meeting Room, Murray County Courthouse, Slayton, MN.

Members Present: Bob Koehler, Larry Byers, Lori Gunnink, Annette Fiedler, Craig Christensen, Shelly Lewis, James Jens, Gerald Magnus, Melissa Runck, Dave Thiner, Duane Spartz, Justin Hoffmann, Jon Bloemendaal, Paul Posthuma, John Busman, Glenn Kluis, Jean Christoffels, and Sarah Soderholm

Sarah called the meeting to order.

Agenda #1 Approval of Minutes

a. 12-14-17 Local Water Management Plan Task Force

MSP: Duane Spartz, Larry Byers to approve the minutes as written.

Agenda #2 FY2018 Capacity Grant Project

Richard VanderZiel applied for the grant to repair the dam on his property; dam failure was caused by the rusted-out metal pipe. TSA technicians surveyed the property and drafted a design at an estimated cost of \$26,600. The project is in Section 35 of Chanarambie Township.

MSP: Lori Gunnink, John Busman to approve using the FY2018 Capacity Grant to fund the Richard VanderZiel dam repair project in Section 35, Chanarambie Township.

Agenda #3 Proposal for Native Planting Incentive Program

Sarah distributed a rough draft of a native planting incentive program, along with pictures of examples, a DNR guidance document, and cost estimates of project examples. Funding source for this program would potentially be the funds set aside by the County Board every year for water quality projects.

With all the flooding this year, many landowners have been approached with the idea of using native plantings on their shoreline because they provide shoreline stability, water quality benefits, and wildlife habitat. Procedurally, nothing would change because we already visit with the landowners on site to view their shoreline and discuss their projects.

At this time, the program was drafted for only those properties in the shoreland areas of the lakes, however, it could be amended to include all areas of shoreland. Buffers adjacent to creeks/streams are handled by the SWCD, whereas the County Ditch Inspector handles buffers for public ditches. Craig felt this would be a great program for just the lakes areas.

Depending on the option chosen, the program could be a straight cost-share of either 50/50 or 25/75 with the landowner responsible for either 50 or 25 percent of the project costs, with a not to exceed dollar amount; any costs above the cost-share would be paid by landowner. Another option would be a tiered approach, where certain characteristics of the site, such as steep bank, could potentially qualify the site for more financial incentives.

Sarah has been working on developing a list of recommended suppliers of the native seeds, plugs, and potted plants. Ultimately, who they purchase the native plants/seeds from would be a choice of the landowners. The intent of the list is to ensure what is used does not contain invasive plants.

MSP: James Jens, Lori Gunnink to accept the concept of the Native Planting Incentive Program and allow staff to continue developing the program for possible inception Spring 2019.

John felt there should be an educational component included with this program because he believes there are lake shore owners that don't understand how their activities impact the lakes water quality. Right now, staff meets with landowners on site and discuss native plantings. A webpage will be created for landowners to visit for more information on native plants, and a flyer/brochure will be printed to distribute to landowners with details about the program and native plant species.

The program would include required inspections both during and after planting, which is already being done. Reimbursement would only come after a final inspection and bill submittals; very similar to the well-seal cost-share.

The goal would be to showcase sites as an educational tool, which permission could be included via the permitting process. Dave commented that landowners need to want to be a showcase site because he saw how sites were maintained when the Heron Lake Watershed District did something like this.

Other suggestions for the educational piece of the program would be to reach out to the newly formed Lakes Association for presentation at their meetings, and possibly an interactive activity for adults and kids to see at the county fair.

Netty suggested the name of the program be changed to "Native Vegetation Planting Incentive Program" to include not only seeds and plants, but also shrubs and trees.

Approval of projects could be handled either administratively or via the Water Plan Committee. It was felt that timing is an issue, so it should be handled administratively to simplify the permitting. Netty also commented that this is a good tool to add into the tool box for water quality.

Agenda #4 Proposed 2019 Budget

15 well seal applications have been received thus far this year, with five of those paid out; total estimated cost share for 2018 is \$5,875, leaving \$2,125 remaining of the budgeted \$8,000 for well sealing.

The 2019 Preliminary Budget was reviewed by the Committee. Still waiting for invoices to be paid for Ecology Bus, Environmental Fair, 4-H Camp, Well Water Testing, and Pit Tile Testing. The Pit Tile Testing was slightly elevated this year, over the budgeted amount.

MSP: Duane Spartz, John Busman to approve the proposed 2019 Budget as presented.

a. Proposal for FY2019 Capacity Grant

Shelly explained that BWSR is again offering a capacity grant for \$14,400 for FY2019 to the SWCD, if the County agrees to match up to \$14,400. The money can be used for projects like the VanderZiel one.

Dave feels money should be spent to monitor the discharge from outlets of private tiles and not just during flood events, which would identify areas where projects are needed. If there are areas with erosion problems, the SWCD can work with the landowners to correct them.

MSP: Duane Spartz, John Busman to recommend to the County Board, approval of the County matching up to \$14,400 to the SWCD for the FY2019 Capacity Grant.

Agenda #5 Murray County Water Planning Updates

a. Well Testing Results

Well testing was completed a little later than normal this year due to the flooding. Dave tested 11 sites, with two sites rolled over to 2019 because they are in areas that were flooded. Sarah reviewed the test results that were handed out.

b. Pit Tile Testing Results

Pit Tile test results were handed out and of the 33 barns sampled this year, 9 had dry tiles and 24 were wet. The samples were tested for Fecal Coliform, Chloride, Ammonia, Nitrate, and Total Dissolved Solids. The table included the previous two years for comparisons. There are four barns that have been dry for the last three years; they could potentially be tested on a less frequent basis.

Agenda #5 Next Meeting/Adjourn

No date was set for the next meeting.

MSP: Lori Gunnink, Dave Thiner to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M. Christoffels
Secretary, Murray County Environmental Services