

Murray County Local Water Management Plan Meeting Minutes December 18, 2015

The Murray County Local Water Management Plan Task Force held a meeting on Friday, December 18, 2015, at 10:00 am in Meeting Room B, Murray County Government Building, Slayton, MN.

Members Present: Glenn Kluis, Ed Lenz, Bob Moline, Gerald Magnus, Jay Takle, David Thiner, Bob Koehler, Jon Hoyme, Howard Konkol, Paul Posthuma, Dave Kremer, Jon Bloemendaal, Chris Hansen and Jean Christoffels

Others Presents: Ed Lenz, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

Chris Hansen called the meeting to order and introduced the new conservationist from BWSR, Ed Lenz; with the rest of the committee introductions.

Agenda #1 Minutes

The minutes from the December 22, 2014, Murray County Local Water Management Plan Meeting, were presented for approval.

MSP: Bob Moline, Jean Christoffels to approve the minutes as written.

Agenda #2 2015 Budget

2015 actual budget was reviewed, noting that all the revenues were as expected. The Administration and Per Diems will be less than budgeted. Feedlot monies will no longer be run through the Block Grant, those dollars will go straight to the Feedlot Program from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Cost savings were realized with the Pit Tile Testing since many of the tiles were dry when tested this year.

A new tip was purchased for the Dissolved Oxygen Meter, which is a piece of equipment used by Chris and the Parks Department to check the oxygen levels in lakes or streams.

Expecting a few more well sealing applications before the end of the year; may need to hold some over until 2016 as they may be at or above the budgeted amount for 2015.

Agenda #3 Approve 2016 Budget

The numbers in the 2016 Budget proposal are Chris' suggestions and may be amended by committee members. Using the carryover dollars from 2015, Chris suggested the following changes to the 2016 proposed budget: add \$2,000 for Administration/Per Diems; lower Water plan Funds forwarded to Water Resources from \$4,000 to \$3,000; increase Water Plan Update from \$2,800 to \$6,000.

A recent change to the Block Grant dollars is that a County has until the end of the following year to spend any carryover monies; 2015 dollars would need to all be spent by December 31, 2016.

Ed Lenz was the one to suggest the increase in the budget for the Water Plan Update as this update will require quite a bit of Chris' time, which will then move into planning for One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) for the Missouri River Basin and the Cottonwood-Redwood River WRAPS. There will need to be quite a bit of Chris' time dedicated to water planning over the next 10 years.

A quick review on what 1W1P planning is all about was given by Ed. In 10 years, when all the plans have been created under the 1W1P concept, all portions of Murray County will be covered under one of three plans: Missouri River, Cottonwood River, or Redwood River, and the current Water Plan can be abandoned. A Water Plan update is done every 10 years with a review every five; last review was 2012 and update must be done in 2017.

Jon Bloemendaal noted his feedlot work plan is tied to the Water Plan, because he must list what is being done in the Water Plan in his work plan. 80% of the feedlot inspections have been completed and Jon will be doing the remaining 20%.

Depending on how dollars are allocated, if something is not designated in the Water Plan as a priority, money should not be spent on it. If you want to utilize some of the Water Plan funding for buffers, it needs to be so stated within the Plan. With regards to the new Buffer Law, if a County would choose to, they could designate additional waters that must be buffered; ie. the County could choose to add a tributary of Lake Shetek to the list of public waters to protect, and then that stream would need to be included in the Water Plan. Ed doesn't see many counties adding other waters to the list, unless there is a particular water resource of concern.

Included in the new buffer legislation is a Soil Loss Law that also must be incorporated into the Water Plan so that State Funding can be used to administer those programs.

Continuing with the 2016 Budget, Chris asked if they would consider increasing the allocated funds to the Ecology Bus, 4-H, and Environmental Fair due to the increased costs to run the programming.

Currently, Murray County pays 75%, up to a maximum of \$250, for well sealing, which is lower than other counties in the area. Chris suggested this be raised to \$350 per well. Well seals are running about \$750 per well, depending on the depth of the well. Nobles County pays 50%, up to a maximum of \$500. If the well seal budget was raised to \$6,000 from \$5,000, that should use up the 2015 carryover amount.

The additional revenue for the SSTS Add-on of \$2,000, is to establish a tracking system where a postcard would be sent to remind owners to pump their septic tanks. Also, would like to create a simple packet to distribute to the landowners for them to use in managing their specific septic system.

No dollars were allocated for 2016 for Hadley to develop their wellhead protection plan, however, it could be included for 2017 if Hadley were to decide to move forward.

Involvement of the Water Plan for the rural water expansion for the lakes area would probably be limited to helping with questions or surveys, as was done in the past. Jay noted that a wellhead protection plan will need to be completed for the new well.

MSP: Howard Konkol, Jon Hoyme to approve the 2016 Budget as amended.

Chris asked for a motion to amend the cost share program for well sealing since Murray County is low comparable to other neighboring counties. It was suggested to keep it simple and be consistent with other counties.

MSP: Howard Konkol, Bob Moline to amend the Well Seal program such that the cost share would be 50% of the cost to seal the well, up to a maximum of \$500 per well, effective January 1, 2016.

Chris has been working with the Ecology Bus to develop a program for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) through the AIS grant dollars the county receives.

In January or February, Murray County is slated to have an audit of the 2014 Block Grant, where the State will evaluate what was budgeted and how the dollars were spent. Ed noted they will be looking at dollar amounts taken in versus what is expended, along with time tracking and billable rates. It takes approximately three to six months for a corrective document to be drafted, which may include the need for counties to either increase staff hours for certain grants or return dollars to the state.

Agenda #4 2016 Water Plan Update

The last Water Plan update was in 2012, so technically a new plan must be completed in 2017. This Committee needs to make a recommendation to the County Board to begin the updating process. A special committee was created for the 2012 review, and generally the advisory committees are usually 12 to 20 individuals; need to make sure to go outside the normal elected and appointed officials.

MSP: Jon Hoyme, Paul Posthuma to recommend to the Murray County Board of Commissioners to approve a resolution to commence with the Water Plan Update in 2016.

Agenda #5 New Member Request

Darrold Peck has been a member for the past five years and since he will be unable to attend meetings, he has requested that he be removed from the Water Plan Committee. If anyone knows of someone willing to fill this vacant position, please encourage them to apply to the County.

Agenda #6 Next Meeting/Adjourn

After the County Board has adopted the resolution to move forward with the update, Chris will send a Doodle-Poll to request availability for a meeting in either February or March.

Tom Keller has expressed an interest to one of the County Commissioners regarding the construction of a dam on his property near Beaver Creek. Bob noted the County's 2015 Water Retention Fund was not utilized for any projects and he wondered if the county could work with the landowner and Area II on the possibility of using the funds for that project. Chris said he would contact the landowner.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M. Christoffels
Murray County Environmental Services