

Murray County Local Water Management Plan Meeting Minutes December 22, 2014

The Murray County Local Water Management Plan Task Force held a meeting on Monday, December 22, 2014, at 1:00 pm in Meeting Room B, Murray County Government Building, Slayton, MN.

Members Present: James Jens, Glenn Kluis, Dave Thiner, Jay Takle, Paul Posthuma, Bob Moline, Gerald Magnus, Duane Spartz, Dave Kremer, Annette Fiedler, Jon Bloemendaal, Chris Hansen and Jean Christoffels

Chris Hansen called the meeting to order and introduced Glenn Kluis, new County Commissioner; with the rest of the committee introductions.

Agenda #1 Water Plan Update

The Water Plan is good through 2017; may start the updating process in late 2015 or 2016, which will include committee meetings to review priorities to ensure everything is current in what the County wants to protect.

Agenda #2 2015 Budget

2014 actual budget was reviewed; the block grant came in and all was paid out with the exception for the monies designated for 4-H. On track with the well seal dollars and the entire 2014 budget.

For the 2015 Budget, Revenues are estimates for the State Grants; County Match dollars were increased as required by the State a couple years ago. Expenditures are similar to previous years; at least 50% of the dollars for Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) must be given to SWCD as Howard administers that program. SSTS dollars are distributed to the Water Resources Department, and the feedlot dollars go the Ag & Solid Waste Administrator for the administration of the feedlot program. Ecology bus dollars are for the three schools in the county, along with the bus program at the County Fair. Half of the wells are sampled each year with the samples sent to Marshall for testing. Pit tiles are tested are for nitrates, coli-form, sulfates, and one other; samples are sent to MVTL in New Ulm. Chris will check with Marshall to see, with their recent changes, they could run the tests for the pit tile samples.

Initially, wells were selected so that there were at least two wells per township, some bored, some drilled, some shallow and some deep. The county has 20 years of data on these wells, but the State will not recognize the data because they want to know the actual location of the well. The people agreed to have wells sampled, but they didn't want the information to be public.

Nitrate testing at the County Fair was low, only tested 15-20 samples this year; typically test 30-40.

The money distributed to the feedlot inspector, Jon Bloemendaal, is to run the feedlot program. Jon has to submit a work plan that includes State requirements where he must inspect 30-40 feedlots each year, he has already inspected 60 this year.

For the low income septic grant, applicants must meet the County low-income standards in order to qualify. One individual has qualified for this 0% grant, and their system should be installed in 2015.

The City of Fulda will be re-certifying their well-head protection area since they drilled a new well; will need to go out further than their previous one. Dollars were given to Fulda for the original development of their well-head protection plan, and money was designated for the City of Hadley, but they have not theirs yet.

Annette suggested a heading change to City Wellhead Protection to cover any city that may request funds for assistance; that dollars be set aside for the water plan update since they may need to begin in late 2015; and to make the heading for watershed projects generic so that the money could be used in different watersheds.

Red Rock Rural Water is doing water exploration south of Dovray for servicing areas south of Currie and possibly the west side of Lake Shetek. The aquifer is a pretty good size, but they will have to have monitoring wells if they move forward with the project.

Years ago Water Plan monies were set aside for rock intakes; monies could be set aside again for projects in a certain watershed. Chris will check with Howard Konkol to see if there would be a need for dollars.

MSP: Jon Bloemendaal, Duane Spartz to approve the 2015 Budget as presented.

Agenda #3 Well Seal Update

Covered during Budget discussions.

Agenda #4 Grant Projects

Applications were sent in for the Johnson project as well as for projects just north of Slayton; may be some interest near Iona to use old railroad bed for retention structure. Chris will continue to apply for grants.

The Steinman project final pay-out will need to be done. Extra stop logs were added to the control structure, which Chris and Jon removed; a couple more logs will need to be removed once the water levels go down so that it will be as engineered.

MSP: James Jens, Jay Takle to approve the March 17, 2014, minutes as written.

Chris has been working with the Missouri River Watershed and also the Rock River TMDL the last few years. Des Moines River Watershed water sampling is still being conducted in four areas – 2014 was intense sampling with 2015 being less; the State pays for all the testing and the County's updated monitoring equipment.

Lake Louisa had major fish kill last winter and now the DNR is using the lake for a walleye stocking pond. Without carp in the lake, the bull rushes are emergent and the water has become clear.

Through the Water Plan Board, one action is to improve surface water in the County. The County has received dollars from the State for dealing with Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) on county lakes. This money comes out of the Local Government Aid (LGA) from the State; the County must develop a plan for spending the dollars, which may only be spent on prevention of AIS.

Agenda #5 Next Meeting/Adjourn

The next meeting will be held in June, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M. Christoffels
Murray County Environmental Services