

**Murray County Local Water Management Plan Meeting
Minutes December 14, 2016**

The Murray County Local Water Management Plan Task Force held a meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2016, at 1:30 pm in Meeting Room B, Murray County Government Building, Slayton, MN.

Members Present: Shelly Lewis, Craig Christensen, Dave Thiner, Bob Moline, James Jens, Paul Posthuma, Jon Bloemendaal, Gerald Magnus, Larry Byers, Glenn Kluis, Duane Spartz, Dave Kremer, Jay Takle, Bob Koehler, Rick Parker, Jon Hoyme, Jean Christoffels, and Ken Bickner

Others Present: Doug Goodrich, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

Ken called the meeting to order and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda, followed by introductions of all in attendance.

Agenda #2 2016 Budget

Ken presented the 2016 Budget Report indicating revenues were as budgeted and then proceeded to review the expenses line by line, noting where there were discrepancies and what may have impacted those differences. The Ecology Bus appeared to have only done two events rather than three as budgeted; a little more was spent on well water and pit tile testing this year, and well sealing is estimated to exceed the budgeted amount.

After much discussion on well sealing, it was determined only \$432.50 was paid out with an estimated \$7,380 more for 2016; Duane will have four additional ones to turn in. For the well seal cost share program, the county will reimburse 50% of the cost to seal the well, up to a maximum of \$500 per well. Wells may not be sealed prior to receipt of grant funds used to pay for the cost share; will need to monitor dates closely.

MSP: Bob Moline, Jon Hoyme to reallocate \$4,000 of the 2016 Water Plan Budget from Water Plan Update to Well Sealing to bring the Well Seal budget item to \$10,000.

Agenda #3 Approve 2017 Budget

A review of the proposed 2017 Budget was conducted, line by line. Ken proposed a change in the Well Water Testing where it would be conducted on a 4-year schedule rather than yearly, where 69 wells would be tested every 4 years. The County has a large data base containing 26 years of test results that no one is really using. The Department of Health will not accept the test results because the County cannot release the names nor the well locations due to waivers that were signed. Bob Koehler noted a longer break between samplings results in less valuable information; plus well management is not identified. The task force agreed well water testing should be changed to every four years; every well will be tested once every four years.

Pit tile testing is conducted every year with half of the pits sampled each year and the other half the next year; samples are sent to New Ulm based on timing and costs. Ken will check with area labs to determine the most cost effective location for testing pit tile samples.

MSP: Duane Spartz, Paul Posthuma to allocate \$1,800 for Pit Tile Testing in the proposed 2017 Water Plan Budget.

There was no increase in the number of wells sealed this year, it was simply a result of an increase in the amount of cost share for each well sealed; 2016 was the first year of the increase. The Task Force considered other options for cost share; the decision was to leave it at 50% cost share up to a maximum of \$500 per well on a first come first serve basis.

MSP: Bob Moline, Jon Hoyme to allocate \$9,000 for Well Sealing in the proposed 2017 Water Plan Budget.

Well Seal Application process in 2017 will be changing as the State is requiring each landowner to complete a W-9 for the Cost-Share. A signed application and W-9 must be submitted prior to having the well sealed.

The Water Plan Update budget amount is \$6,000, however, Ken was not fully aware of what expenses were expected other than possibly a consultant to assist with the update. The update will be completely written in-house, with other expenses incurred for additional meetings, printing, public notices, and public hearing, but would not be as much as \$6,000.

For the Beaver Creek Watershed Projects, it would be great to add dollars into this line item if there are any left over. The Keller project is still being looked at, waiting for a flowage easement to be drafted and signed.

MSP: Jean Christoffels, Duane Spartz to allocate \$4,000 to Beaver Creek Watershed Projects and the balance of the funds to be allocated to the Water Plan Update so that it will zero out the proposed 2017 Water Plan Budget.

Agenda #1 2017 Revisions to Local Water Management Plan

The Water Plan Update document was sent to the Task Force Members with their agenda for the meeting. Doug Goodrich noted the update is a rough draft at best, as there is much more that needs to be included in the plan, including an assessment of what has been completed in the last ten years.

Basically, the County needs to start from scratch on the narrative of the plan from 10 years ago. Research will need to be done of existing plans and projects currently in process – the Des Moines River and the Cottonwood River; modeling or different ways of looking at things; the Department of Health advance nitrate testing for wells and whether it would have any impacts on the County.

The Priority Concerns were accepted and approved by the State; it is recommended to provide the big five State Agencies with a copy of the draft as soon as possible rather than wait until noticing them of the public hearing in case they have any advice on implementation of the plan. The Submittal Timeline is very aggressive, but doable. Other counties recently completing this process are: Pipestone and Cottonwood; it was suggested to look at their plans as a template since they have already been approved.

The main thrust of this is an executive summary explaining what the county is going to do, who is going to do it, and how much it is going to cost. The biggest push is to identify what and where you are going to target areas of the County's priority concerns, what tools will be used and how will the outcome be measured; and how it is going to be meaningful to the State. The plan should include what and how many projects the County is planning to work on in the next 10 years with an estimate of what they may cost.

The identified four priority concerns in the Priority Concerns Scoping Document were approved by BWSR. Using the current document as a starting point, the Task Force was asked if there are any specific project areas they feel the County should be targeting, and what projects they are aware of that have been completed since the last plan update.

Bob Moline has had his land adjacent to waterways tiled and then put in berms to help stop erosion; he was wondering if that would be something for the County to look at for future water retention projects to improve water quality. Bob feels the County needs to work with the SWCD office to identify projects for the plan. He also added that the County made water quality improvements through projects such as installing a sewer system around the lakes area.

Dave Thiner believes wellhead protection areas should be identified as priority project areas and that the County should be encouraging these smaller communities to get them adopted. Duane stated the Department of Health prioritized the wells that must be done; by the end of 2017, the State wants them all done.

Doug noted the County should compare the old plan to the new one, along with using Pipestone's and Cottonwood's approved plans as templates.

To assist Ken with drafting the plan update, the question was raised as to what the Task Force feels needs to be addressed in this update. The following were suggested to be included: Buffers, Wetland Restoration, private septic systems, County septic loan programs, Avoca Dam replacement, Holly Township Project, connect Avoca Park to city sewer, and connection of End-O-Line Park bathrooms to City of Currie sewer system when they re-sewer the entire town.

Projects that have been accomplished, all municipalities in Murray County are sewered; water retention structure on Roger Steinman, dam repair north of Hadley, CREP or RIM project north of Slayton, wetland restoration north of Dovray, number of wells sealed since the last plan, Holly Township retention projects, wetland restoration for Gengler's west of Iona, sewer system for Current Lake Campground, and Level III Inventory of 40-50 feedlots in Des Moines River Watershed.

Bob Moline also thought it would be good to include in the narrative of the plan update that with the installation of the sewer in the lakes areas, the County has seen an increase in home improvements and new construction.

Agenda #4 Next Meeting/Adjourn

Ken will send a Doodle-Poll for a meeting on either January 11th or 18th; Wednesday afternoons were thought to be more ideal by the group.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M. Christoffels
Secretary, Murray County Environmental Services