Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Meeting Notes of the
Watershed Plan Steering Committee
October 4, 2023 @ 8:30 a.m.
Golden Valley City Hall

Meeting Attendees:
Commissioners Cesnik and Welch; Alternate Commissioners Polzin and Harwell; TAC Members Ray, Scharenbroich, and Eckman; Golden Valley resident Linda Loomis; Administrator Jester; Commission Engineers Chandler and Williams

1. **WELCOME**
With the committee chair being absent, committee member Polzin agreed to chair this meeting and opened the meeting at 8:37.

2. **REVIEW SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING NOTES**
Committee member Welch requested changes to section 3 of the minutes to add more information about the discussion on engaging commissioners and to section 6 to indicate that Committee Chair Kennedy agreed to continue serving as chair.

There was consensus that committee member Welch's recommended changes to the minutes were appropriate. **The minutes were revised and approved with consensus of the group**.

3. **DISCUSS MISSION, VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES**
In his absence, Administrator Jester reviewed Committee Chair Kennedy's comments on the guiding principles; she also noted that work on a vision, mission, or guiding principles was not included in the original scope and budget for plan development. She also reviewed information on the definition and purpose of mission statements, vision statements, and guiding principles. She noted that no committee members offered comments on the mission statement via email.

The group reviewed the current mission statement: *Stewardship of water resources to protect and enhance our communities.* Committee members discussed the merits of having a mission statement and the possibility that a mission statement isn't needed at all. It was noted the current statement is very broad and yet the plan should be more focused.

Administrator Jester and committee member Cesnik will work together before the next meeting to develop possible vision/mission statements and will consider the necessity or benefits of having statements. Committee member Cesnik noted she liked the simplicity of the Shingle Creek WMO's latest watershed plan.

4. **REVIEW PLAN PROCESS CALENDAR**

Administrator Jester reviewed the plan process calendar which lays out the expected work and discussion topics for Plan Steering Committee meetings through 2024. Members thought it was helpful to see all the topics in one place. Committee member Welch reiterated that the plan should be comprised only of actions the Commission intends to take and focused on priority areas and strategies. He noted that the Commission is currently too reactionary and not often proactively identifying projects and addressing issues. He hoped the Commission could develop a more sophisticated approach to integrating its work with others through the use of adaptive management. Administrator Jester reminded committee members that subwatershed analyses are one tool to

help the Commission identify and prioritize projects and practices where they are needed most. Committee member Welch noted that sometimes its helpful for a watershed organization to be the rule enforcer and to sometimes say "no" to a potential project if it doesn't fit the Commission's goals and priorities.

Committee member Polzin wondered if a proactive, science-based approach was a good guiding principle. There was discussion about needing overall guiding principles early in the process so the goals and policies developed could be tested against them. The group also hoped to get a general sense of the level of effort and financial resources needed to implement potential strategies and actions. Staff agreed to add a general cost to potential actions. There was acknowledgment that plan development will be an iterative process.

5. **DISCUSS PLAN DEVELOPMENT BUDGET STATUS**
Administrator Jester reported that the plan development process is currently running over budget in the areas completed so far due to more time taken for initial discussions and a more robust public open house than anticipated. She reported that staff expected the total planning budget to be over by about 20%. Committee members asked that this information be taken to the full Commission in October to make sure the process should continue or determine if something should change.

6. **REVIEW NEW FORMAT & FINALIZE ISSUE STATEMENT AND GOALS FOR IMPAIRED WATERS & CHLORIDE**
Engineer Williams reviewed the new table format for presenting goals and issues; noted that potential actions or strategies were added; defined the "desired future condition" column; and reviewed the purpose of the new "notes" section. He noted that the new format is a working tool that may not translate well into the final plan. It was noted that a table like this might be helpful in the plan's executive summary as it's easier to digest.

There was discussion about the desired future condition related to impaired waters. There was consensus to change it to "Water quality in priority waterbodies meets or exceeds applicable State water quality standards."

There was a discussion about a staff recommendation to assess the status of the Medicine Lake TMDL now (during the planning process) so that results could be included as actions, policies, and projects in the plan.

Consensus: The Plan Steering Committee recommends that the Commission seek a proposed scope and budget for a Medicine Lake TMDL status assessment from the Commission Engineer.

There was a discussion about the appropriate goals for Lost Lake and Northwood Lake. Some committee members indicated their desire to delist those lakes within the 10-year life of the plan. Administrator Jester asked if there should be a focus on high priority goals (like delisting Medicine Lake) and wondered about the Commission's actual ability to also delist Lost and Northwood. There was a brief discussion about performing subwatershed analyses for the lakes right now during the planning process but there was no consensus on that item.

[Notes from the meeting on particular issues and goals are also included in the notes section of the goals table.]

Staff agreed to include a note in the goals/issues table when a proposed activity or strategy would be something new for the Commission.

7. **SET SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE PSC MEETINGS**
The group decided to hold meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m.

8. **ADJOURN**
The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.