

# Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance Technical Committee

Friday, July 16, 2021 – WebEx by Phone or Computer Connection

## **Present:**

Andy Meyer  
Dave Bucklin  
Scott Salisbury  
Melanie Krueger  
Ashley Brenke  
Laura Quiring  
Mark Schaetzke  
Hadley Mensing  
Brenda Lageson  
Dru Larson  
Paul Davis  
Ed Lenz

## **Representing:**

Brown County  
GBERBA Coordinator  
Blue Earth County  
Brown SWCD  
Martin SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Waseca SWCD  
Faribault SWCD  
Freeborn SWCD  
MN/IA Conservation Corps  
MPCA  
BWSR

## **Present:**

Kay Gross  
Nathan Carr  
Alan Gleisner  
Carrie Schultz  
Mark Trnka  
Dan Bartosh  
Jake Fritz  
Andy Geiger  
Shane Johnson  
Jill Sackett Eberhart  
Shania Keseley

## **Representing:**

GBERBA Coordinator  
Faribault SWCD  
Brown SWCD  
Watonwan SWCD  
Freeborn SWCD  
Jackson SWCD  
Blue Earth SWCD  
Jackson County  
Faribault SWCD  
BWSR  
BWSR

**Call to Order:** GBERBA Technical Committee Vice Chair Andy Meyer called the meeting to order at 9:36 am.

## **Introductions**

**Agenda:** Motion by Jake Fritz, second by Ashley Brenke to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

**Minutes:** Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Ashley Brenke to approve the June 23, 2021 Technical Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried, all yes.

## **INFORMATION ACTION:**

### **GBERBA Contract Cancellation**

Scott Gossman	81-16(319-TMDL-16)	Cover Crops – 181.71 ac.	C-S \$3,634.00	Cost \$7,268.00
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Motion by Mark Schaetzke, second by Jake Fritz to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract cancellation for Gossman (319-TMDL-16-81-16) \$3,634.00. Motion carried.

### **GBERBA Contract Final Payment**

Marie Swedberg	22-68(319-TMDL-16)	Alternative Tile Intakes – 1 no.	C-S \$250.00	Cost \$597.20
Mavis Sabin	22-69(319-TMDL-16)	Alternative Tile Intakes – 1 no.	C-S \$250.00	Cost \$597.20
J-Ace Farms	22-65(319-TMDL-16)	Cover Crops – 745 ac.	C-S \$14,174.00	Cost \$28,571.50

Motion by Dave Bucklin, second by Shane Johnson to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract final payments for M. Swedberg (319-TMDL-16-22-68) \$250.00, M. Sabin (319-TMDL-16-22-69) \$250.00 and J-Ace Farms (319-TMDL-16-22-65) \$14,174.00.00. Motion carried.

## **Review GBERBA Cost-Share Grant Balances and Financial Report**

### **1W1P Le Sueur River Planning Grant**

Contract with ISG has been finalized. Negotiations still ongoing with MSU-WRC. Preparing for the Policy Meeting next week (in person) and will be working on an issues table.

### **Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant**

#### **Multipurpose Drainage Management Studies – Definition and Expectations**

Watonwan Watershed – Multipurpose Drainage Management Studies – Definition - Discussion

As for the MDM Studies, our Watonwan Watershed Plan goal is to "Coordinate with the drainage authorities to implement MDM on 10 public drainage systems to improve water quality and flood resiliency in tandem with the maintenance and repair of drainage systems.

Andy and Ashley will work on updating and send out in early August for review.

## **Legal Counsel**

Tim Sullivan has provided us with contract language to review with discussion by Technical Committee. Questions for counsel – can the contract be for more than one grant, does it need to be specific?

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**Coordinator Report:** Dave Bucklin and Kay Gross

☆ **MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program**

Update on progress made in areas 5 and 6 – See Certification Specialist Reports. Over 761,000 acres and over 1063 certified producers statewide!

GBERBA has the Area 5 and 6 MAWQCP administrative contract approved through 2021. The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program has launched three new endorsements in addition to 10-year certification a farmer or landowner receives in the program. The endorsements are for soil health (31), integrated pest management (31), wildlife (22) and climate smart (12).

NRCS announced a June 4<sup>th</sup> application deadline for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP – MAWQCP). RCPP is a partnership between NRCS and MAWQCP. Producers who are seeking certification or are already certified are eligible to receive funding. Priority is given to practices that are needed for a producer to obtain certification. Dru Larson, MN/IA Conservation Corps Member will be assisting with this program in 2021

☆ **2017 MPCA 319 Grant - Cover Crops and Alternative Tile Intakes**

An Implementation Policy Paper for this grant titled "Greater Blue Earth River Basin TMDL Implementation" is found on the GBERBA web site. Cover crops: \$50.00 dollars per acre maximum, 50% c/s (\$25.00 ac.). Prioritization required. Alternative intakes: Rock and pattern tile. \$500.00 maximum with 50% cost share.

Perforated risers, broom and other water quality intakes: \$200.00 maximum and 50% cost share. These are federal dollars and require state or local match.

The end date of the grant is August 31, 2021. This grant is now fully encumbered. Funding awarded as available.

☆ **2017 CWF Grant- Multipurpose Drainage Management**

Multipurpose Drainage Management - \$301,200: Projects for this Drainage Grant will need to be located in public ditch sheds. GBERBA member entire counties are eligible. Priority parameters to identify the eligible ditches. A guidance policy sheet is online. At this time, GBERBA has received a third grant time extension. In addition, GBERBA can pay grant-engineering funds to approved projects even if not constructed prior to grant deadline. BWSR staff has now approved the extension for the entire grant to April 30, 2022.

☆ **Watonwan River Watershed - Implementation Grant**

Implementation grant funds are available now with the Grant 41 Policy distributed to all GBERBA members and partners. The grant timeline is 3-24-2021 to 12-31-2023. The Project Ranking Worksheet is used for project priority.

Legal counsel has been contracted to review the need for additional contracts with member entities or others and recourse and/or errors and omissions if non-compliance issues arise when completing projects. The Technical Committee is working on the Multipurpose Drainage Management Study definition and expectations, with hope to have that completed by the July 16 Policy Board Meeting. A BWSR interim report is due August 27 for grant expenditures through June 30, 2021.

☆ **Le Sueur River Watershed – One Watershed One Plan**

Waseca SWCD is in the process of contract negotiations with ISG who is subcontracting with Freshwater for facilitation services. Consultant scope and expectations are being more clearly defined so that both sides have a good understanding of expectations. Our Policy Committee has opted to meet in person with the meeting location rotating throughout the four participating counties. An in-person kickoff meeting with supplemental survey is tentatively planned for September and will be organized by the WRC. Haley will be out for leave from July-Sept and is coordinating with other staff who will complete her day-to-day duties for that time.

☆ **CWF 2020 Watonwan Drinking Water Grant.** The grant funding is available now to encumber! The grant timeline is 3-25-2021 to 12-31-2023. Grant Policy #40 has been distributed to staff, please review for eligible practices and grant guidelines. Project contracts are coming in for funding.

**Staff Report:**

**Area 6 Certification Specialist** – Herman Bartsch – Written Report

**Area 5 Certification Specialist** – Danielle Evers – Written Report

**Conservation Corp Member** – Dru Larson – Written Report

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**Agency Reports:**

**BWSR** – Jill Sackett Eberhart – 2021 Legislative Session Funding (Shared Content-Will Send Out). General Fund appropriates have remained the same. Additional funds this biennium 1.4 million Septic System Replacement Grant, Water Storage and Treatment (one time) and Soil Health via Ag Cover Crops (could be ongoing).

**BWSR** - Shaina Keseley – Clean Water Fund RFP - June 30 through August 17 12 million in grants and 7 million in loans. Practices and Projects, Drinking Water Protection and Multipurpose Drainage Management.

**MPCA** - Paul Davis – Data analysis for the Blue Earth River Watershed, will be meeting with locals individually (Counties/SWCDs). Semi-annual reports are coming due – please remember.

**DNR** – Rick Moore – Not in attendance

**MSU-WRC** – Kim Musser – Not in attendance.

**OTHER:**

**Clean Water Fund** – Any ideas or thoughts on proposals?

**Future Technical Committee Meetings**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 11:45 a.m. by Vice Chair Andy Meyer.

**Upcoming Meetings**

Technical Committee Meeting	Wednesday, August 25, 2021	9:30 a.m.
Executive Board Meeting	Wednesday, August 25	1:00 p.m.
Policy Board Meeting	Friday, September 10, 2021	1:00 p.m.

Secretary's signature of approved minutes \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_