

GBERBA Policy Board Meeting Minutes
Friday, September 22, 2023
Blue Earth SWCD Meeting Room – Mankato, MN
WebEx Option Available

Present: Brad Augustin, Bruce Anderson, Tom Appel, Tyler Ask, Tony Berg, Nicole Ekstrom, Rich Enger, Steve Flohrs, Larry Hansen, Kevin Paap, Don Kropp, Clark Lingbeek, Bill Miller, and John Shanahan

Others Present: Adam Bielke, Dave Bucklin, Jill Sackett Eberhart, Anna Fairbanks, Kay Gross, Nathan Harder, and Eric Miller.

Call to Order - Chairman Clark Lingbeek called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Introductions

Agenda

Motion by Rich Enger, second by Tony Berg to approve the Policy Board agenda as presented. Motion carried, all yes. On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Minutes

Motion by Steve Flohrs, second by Tony Berg to approve the July 14, 2023, minutes as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

INFORMATION/ACTION

Financial Report

The Financial Report dated 8/1/23 to 8/31/23 was presented for the Board's review. Motion by Jim Eigenberg, second by Bill Miller to approve the financial report as presented. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Accounts Payable

Motion by Bill Miller, second by Tyler Ask to approve the accounts payable and pay the bills totaling \$50,354.81. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

COST-SHARE PROJECTS

GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Amendment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)

Ronald Thiessen 83-13(WBIF-WW-21) Grass Waterway Amend #2 Increase C-S \$11,117.75 C-S \$29,329.67
New Cost \$34,505.50

Motion by Tom Appel, second by Steve Flohrs to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract amendment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Thiessen (WBIF-WW-21-83-13) Grass Waterway cost-share increase by \$11,117.75 to \$29,329.67. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Approval - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)

Roger D Schmeissing 83-33(WBIF-WW-21) Grade Stabilization – 1 no. Cost \$22,606.00 C-S \$19,215.10
Living Trust

Trevor Jensen 83-34(WBIF-WW-21) Well Decommissioning – 1 no. Cost \$1,327.50 C-S \$663.75

Emily Norland 83-35(WBIF-WW-21) Conservation Cover–Shoreland Cost \$8,687.00 C-S \$7,383.95

Motion by Rich Enger, second by Bill Miller to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contracts - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Schmeissing (WBIF-WW-21-83-33) Grade Stabilization (\$19,215.10), Jensen (WBIF-WW-21-83-34) well decommissioning (\$663.75) and Norland (WBIF-WW-21-83-35) conservation covers (\$7,383.95).

Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

GBERBA Cost-Share Contract Final Payment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)

Ronald Thiessen 83-13(WBIF-WW-21) Grass Waterway Cost \$34,505.50 C-S \$29,329.68

Motion by Tyler Ask, second by Steve Flohrs to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract final payment - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483) for Thiessen (WBIF-WW-21-83-13) grass waterway (\$29,329.68). Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

GBERBA – Cost-Share Contract Final Payment – FY21 - CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921)

City of Mountain Lake 17-07(CWF-WWDW-21) Tree/Shrub Est. – 9 no. Cost \$900.00 C-S \$750.82

Motion by Kevin Paap, second by Tom Appel to approve the GBERBA Cost-Share contract final payment - FY21 - CWF – Watonwan Watershed Drinking Water Protection Grant Agreement (C21-8921) for City of Mountain Lake (CWF-WWDW-21-17-07) Tree/Shrub Establishment (\$750.82). Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

**GBERBA – Grant 42 – MDH – Groundwater Protection Initiative – Watonwan Watershed
GBERBA – Grant 41 - FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant (C21-2483)**

Watonwan County	Grant 42-MDH	Administrative Hours – Banners	Cost \$806.52
Watonwan County	Grant 42-MDH	Banner Supplies – Mailing Tubes	Cost \$45.99
Blue Earth SWCD	WBIF-WW-21	Education – Mailing – 158 mailgin	Cost \$360.24

Motion by Bill Miller, second by John Shanahan to approve the payments GBERBA Grant 42 – MDH – Groundwater Protection Initiative – Watonwan Watershed Watonwan County Administration (\$806.52) and Supplies (\$45.99) and FY2021 BWSR WBIF – Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant (C21-2483) Blue Earth SWCD (360.24) Educational Expenses. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

MAWQCP Contract Approval

Nathan Traxler	MAWQCP(40-6-11)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00
Hemme Brothers Inc.	MAWQCP(67-5-38)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00
Rodney Ask	MAWQCP(46-6-17)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00
Michael Erbes	MAWQCP(51-5-26)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00
Loren Heintz	MAWQCP(51-5-27)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00
Luke Stevens	MAWQCP(57-5-28)	Worksheet Completion	Incentive \$100.00

Motion by Tony Berg, second by Steve Flohrs to approve the MAWQCP incentive payments for Traxler, Hemme Brothers, Ask, Erbes, Heintz, Stevens (\$100.00). Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Review Grant Balances

Bruce Anderson joined meeting.

2022 GBERBA Financial Statement

Motion by Steve Flohrs, second by Tony Berg to approve the GBERBA Financial Statement as completed by Peterson Company LLC for year ending December 31, 2022.

Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Dues Discussion (bring back for discussion in November)

Watonwan Watershed Implementation

Request to Move Funding – Grant 41 Policy

Motion by Tom Appel, second by Rich Enger to approve moving funding in the Grant 41 Policy (FY2021 BWSR WBIF-Watonwan Watershed Implementation Grant Agreement (C21-2483)) \$13,247.82 from Shoreland Protection to Agricultural Practices. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

WBIF Second Round Grant Policy

Motion by Tony Berg, second by Tom Appel to approve the WBIF – Second Round Request For Funding Grant Policy. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Request for Funding (Second Round WBIF) and Grant Policy

Motion by Steve Flohrs, second by Bill Miller to approve the BWSR WBIF Request for Funding – Watonwan Watershed totaling \$1,136,479. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

DocuSign From Grant Agreements

Motion by Rich Enger, second by Tyler Ask to allow GBERBA Administrative Coordinator to sign all grant agreements through DocuSign and follow-up with approval by Policy/Executive Board.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

BWSR – CRP State Incentive Pilot Program

WBIF Watonwan Watershed Disbursal Agreement for Cottonwood County

Motion by Tom Appel, second by Tony Berg to approve the Watonwan Watershed Based Implementation Funding Grant Proceed Disbursal Agreement between the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance and Cottonwood County. Motion carried, all yes.

On-line vote Yes – Anderson Yes – Augustin Yes – Ekstrom Yes – Hansen Yes – Paap Yes - Kropp

Don Kropp Leaving Meeting

1W1P Le Sueur River Watershed Planning/Implementation – Eric Miller

Official adoption of plans are almost completed by Counties and SWCDs! Putting together implementation policies. Policy meeting on Friday (22nd) try to have funding by January 1, 2024.

Watonwan Drinking Water Protection Grant

Working to finalize remaining funds with a Water Testing event in each County. Targeted mailing to DWSMA or shallow wells, nitrate/other testing options. Each county can use \$125 for promotional. Looking ad/news release to send out to all six counties. Define costs.

MDH Accelerated Implementation Grant: Groundwater Protection Initiative

Banners completed and distributed to Watonwan Watershed members.

CWF Soil Health Grant RFP Update

Information/Database for Soil Health Farm Activities – Web Based Platform (Committee). Email Nathan Harder and Kay Gross if interested in being a committee member.

COORDINATOR REPORT

☆ MN Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program

Update on progress made in areas 5 and 6 – See Certification Specialist Reports. Over 990,000 acres and over 1360 certified producers statewide! **The MAWQCP is just shy of ONE MILLION acres certified. That equals nearly 4% of all farm ground in Minnesota.** The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program has endorsements in addition to certification. The endorsements are for soil health, integrated pest management, wildlife, and climate smart.

☆ Watonwan River Watershed - Implementation Grant

Working on second funding request with partners.

As of August 18, we have encumbered or paid for \$562,781.52 with \$137,695.48 remaining.

Breakdown:	Category	Funding Allotted	Remaining	Encumbered	Paid
	Administration	\$120,857	\$30,368.74		\$90,488.26
	BMPs	\$510,320	\$42,231.07	\$371,471.42	\$96,617.51
	Tech/Eng.	\$10,000	\$9,637.30		\$362.70
	Project Dev.	\$15,000	\$237.31		\$14,762.69
	Inventory/Map.	\$5,000	\$5,000		\$0.00
	Planning/Asses.	\$24,300	\$9,300		\$15,000.00
	Education/Infor.	\$15,000	\$13,924.46		\$1,075.54
	TOTAL	\$700,477	\$110,698.88	\$371,471.42	\$218,306.70
			(16%)	(84%)	

★ **1W1P Le Sueur River Watershed Comprehensive Plan**

The plan is out for 90-day review by State agencies. The Plan has full BWSR Board approval after the meeting on August 23- 24.
The Le Sueur group are now working on an implementation policy.

★ **CWF 2020 Watonwan Drinking Water Grant**

The Drinking Water Grant is in its final year. The grant deadline is 12/31/2023. We are on target to finish the grant and use all funds available. Will focus on a summer event for water testing (testing will be paid for locally) and the grant will focus on advertising the event.

★ **MDH 2022 Watonwan Groundwater Protection Accelerated Implementation Grant**

State grant funds total \$21,898 with a grant start date of July 15, 2022 and now ending June 28, 2024. Groundwater banners have been completed – two related to nutrient management and one focusing on groundwater in general. We will get them out as soon as possible to the respective offices.

★ **BWSR Soil Health Grant**

Program start date 11-7-2022. Promotional efforts are now focusing on the available incentives for cover crops, no/strip-till, manure management, and CRP.

★ **BWSR – CRP State Incentive Pilot Program – Watonwan Watershed**

Funding has been requested for the Watonwan Watershed (\$30,000) with an end date of December 31, 2025. We will be working on a work plan for this funding. Eligible activities include administration and incentive payment to landowners for Continuous CRP enrollments. No match required. BWSR correspondence will be included in the Technical and Policy packets for September.

STAFF REPORTS

MAWQCP Presentation – Herman Bartsch and Danielle Evers

Agency Reports

BWSR – Jill Sackett Eberhart, Adam Bielke

CWF reconciliation for all BWSR grants, keep in mind the dollars must be reconciled before payments can be made. A lot of funding has been brought forward by the legislature, there will be easement, storage, soil health programs. Legislative language NRBG, TSA and SWCD Operations grant agreements so the expiration dates were submitted wrong so please keep an eye on those dates. Adam Bielke, Clean Water Specialist fill-in introduction. CWF grant programs proposals have ended with awards coming in December.

Other Business – None

Meeting declared adjourned by Chairman Clark Lingbeek 2:45 p.m.

Next Meetings

Executive Board Meeting	October 13, 2023	1:00 p.m.
Technical Meeting	October 18, 2023	9:00 a.m.
Policy Board/Technical Committee Meeting	November 17, 2023	9:30 a.m.

Secretary's signature of approved minutes _____ Date _____