

Watershed Assessment Group Minutes
Story County Administration Building, Public Meeting Room
Thursday, February 13, 2020

Present were Leanne Harter, Linda Murken, Sandra King, Mike Cox, Jerry Moore, Scott Wall, Darren Moon, and Margaret Jaynes

Harter called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Wall moved, second by Moore, to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Jaynes presented a learning moment explaining that DNR delisted the lower reach of Ballard Creek from the Impaired Water Body list because of “assessment error”, probably a reclassification of the creek.
<https://www.iowadnr.gov/environmental-protection/water-quality/water-monitoring/impaired-waters>

Murken moved, second by Jaynes to approve the December 2, 2019 meeting minutes.

Moore moved, second by Wall to approve the October, 18, 2019 meeting minutes.

Old business – none.

New business. Murken reported that the FY-2021 county budget did not support a new water coordinator position. Murken explained that she understands the importance of the position to accomplish goals of the group. She suggested that the group needs to show tangible accomplishments in water quality (monitoring, outreach, ordinances, policy, BMP conservation measures, drainage district efforts, floodplain, etc.) between now and September, 2020. The group should plan on presenting the accomplishments and future needs to the BOS in order to demonstrate the need for a water coordinator position for FY-2022. Jaynes and Cox expressed their disappointment with no new position decision by the BOS. Jaynes asked Cox if the Conservation staff duties could be shuffled so that Jerry Keys could participate more in the water quality workload. Cox said that Keys is fully dedicated to Conservation Education, but will be involved as time allows.

Murken suggested the group meet monthly, limiting the meetings to two hours. She said that focus is lost with the quarterly meetings.

Again, the group went through the items on the implementation matrix and provided updates:

Item 1.1 – Storm Water Ordinance – done. Moore indicated that this covers erosion control and storm water management. Murken asked if EOR goals will be met with the ordinance. Moore said he thought they would be met, however, he said he would check the EOR goals against the adopted ordinance. Staff is working on outreach.

Item 1.2 – Flood Plain Ordinance. Harter said the ordinance was effective January 1, 2020. One important change is limiting fill in the floodway. She said that most changes are zoning issues that will be addressed by P&D.

Item 2.1 – Convene Water Quality Working Group. Harter will reword this to show appointed members/positions.

Item 2.2 a) – Cost Share for Fencing, Vegetation. Murken said we need to identify ways to promote existing programs, and expressed concern over the county’s duplication of funding for projects, and suggested county funding should fill gaps in funding opportunity.

Item 2.2 b) – Incentives for buffers. No comments at this time.

Item 2.2 c) – Land Development Regulations. Moore said a complete review of the land development regulations are on the P&D work plan. Murken said we need to add 2.2 d) to continue to work on acquiring the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) land on the Skunk River.

Item 2.3 – Mitigation Bank. Cox and Murken discussed the IDALS project in the west Story, east Boone area, and the setback because of a landowner not wanting to participate in the project. Murken will ask IDALS for updates.

Item 2.4 – Mitigation Bank. Cox said that 2.4 and 2.3 will be combined. He offered to do a learning moment on banking.

Item 2.5 – Protect Native Prairie Remnants. Moore said the remnants need to first be identified in order to be protected. Moore said that Dr. Rosburg is mapping the sensitive flora areas for the county, and that this information will need to be combined with the natural resources mapping being conducted by P&D staff (currently working on mapping the west 1/3 of county). When this mapping has been completed, it will help us address the action items in 2.5 and 2.6. Harter said the C2C will need to be amended to include this. Jaynes asked if the prairie remnant work being done for the proposed Dotson subdivision will be used as a model for an ordinance for future SDs. The study resulted in proposed changes in lots and septic. We discussed adding the Dotson study to the website and also presenting it to the BOS in September, 2020.

Item 2.6 – Sensitive Environmental Areas. Moore said this is a follow-up to 2.5.

Item 2.7 – Nutrient Reduction. Jaynes said that the proposed septic ordinance is being reviewed by the attorney’s office to be presented to the BOS in March 2020. The proposed mandatory maintenance requirement will impact nutrient and bacteria reduction. Jaynes said that there will need to be a big outreach effort to educate rural homeowners. We discussed adding this as subsection c) or 2.17. Murken suggested Jaynes link the proposed ordinance to the water quality matrix when presenting the ordinance to the BOS.

Item 2.8 – Drainage District Guide. Moon presented fact sheets written by ISG for BMPs and water quality funding. Moon updated the group on the IDALS ISU project. Murken suggested Moon, Wall and she meet to discuss EOR Appendix B of the report (county role as Drainage District Trustees) and will update the group at the next meeting.



Drainage ditch
BMPs.pdf

Item 2.9 – Water Quality Monitoring. Cox said the BOS approved the contract with Prairie Rivers for water quality monitoring and outreach. Cox will send a copy of the contract to the group, and will talk with Prairie Rivers about us receiving quarterly reports. Ames lab will do the testing, county will coordinate the volunteers. Jaynes will need to incorporate the BOH data from testing conducted in late

2019 downstream from AFOs. Cox mentioned that Ames has called a meeting regarding monitoring for 2/14/20.



Prairie Rivers water
quality monitoring contract.pdf

Item 2.10 – Municipal Outreach. Moore said this is a medium priority and not much has been done. Jaynes indicated EH has not done any municipal outreach recently. Moore said that he is thinking about sending a survey to municipalities asking if they have stormwater ordinances. Jaynes suggested the survey include source water protection planning questions. Murken asked if there are other sources for this information so as not to cause undue alarm to the municipalities. Jaynes suggested IAMU could be of assistance; Harter suggested economic development groups. The group decided to make these questions part of a larger survey.

Item 2.11 – WMA Collaboration. Murken said that are three WMAs with 28Es: Squaw Creek, Headwaters, and Four Mile. Headwaters has not had any meetings yet.

Item 2.12 – Erosion Control/Storm Water Management. Cox, Harter, and Moore recently met to discuss outreach for the stormwater erosion ordinance and BMPs. The most important target audience is developers. Moore said that outreach is addressed in the Flood Control PPI. The group discussed how the Dotson SD sensitive area ties into this. Harter said that C2C already discourages development in sensitive areas.

Item 2.13 – Nutrient Reduction Outreach. Cox mentioned using ISU U-TuRN and the modeling tool, but no steps to take immediately. <https://www.uturn.iastate.edu/>

Item 2.14 a) – Floodplain Management, county attorney. Harter indicated that a) is done as it relates to the FP ordinance.

Item 2.14 b) – Floodplain Management, discussions. Murken said that the matrix may be vague compared to the suggestions in EOR, but suggested this be addressed later. Harter indicated that discussions for “no adverse impact” are ongoing between DNR and FEMA.

Item 2.14 c) – Floodplain Management, outreach. Harter said the Program for Public Information (PPI) for our floodplain community rating system (2014) will be used to get the revised regulation information out.

Item 2.15 – Feedlot Outreach. Jaynes presented a draft document to be used for website development. The document guides laypeople through the basics of identifying manure management practices that are acceptable (lawful) and assists with support for complaints when water quality impacts arise. Jaynes offered to set up training for county staff who are frequently traversing the county to be able to identify manure management practices that are impacting water quality. Moon offered a time slot during his department training, scheduled for March 16.

Item 2.16 – Source Water. Jaynes offered to do a quick review to determine which municipalities have a protection plan in place. If the information is not available, add the question to the survey (see Item 2.10).

Item 2.17 – Wastewater. Jaynes reported that she did not add any septic replacement cost sharing in the 2021 Environmental Health budget. She said that there needs to be a way to narrow down the pool of

eligible property owners, such as the grant program used for septic replacements in the Hickory Grove Lake watershed. Murken requested Jaynes bring a county map of the systems to the next meeting for discussion.

Item 3.1 – Drainage Ditches. Wall said that the improvements are driven by districts, so there is not much the county can do. Murken asked if the ditches can be changed (reshaped for example) to improve water quality. Moon said he could talk to the engineer doing the report. It would have to be a project under way; county cannot initiate.

Item 3.2 – County Infrastructure. Moon said that new stream crossings are using a box culvert or bridge. Due to county conditions (soils, water velocity) the open bottom options are limited. Moon will review the EOR recommendations and see if they can be incorporated into the implementation matrix.

The groups' discussion turned toward wetlands. Murken said that wetlands should be added to the 2.2 and 2.4 matrix items. Murken asked if there are any wetlands the county can purchase. Cox said that the county does not have any specific plans to purchase wetlands, but if a piece of land is up for acquisition, the presence of wetlands is factored into the rating for purchasing that land (ACPF toolbox is used). Murken said that she will contact Boeck regarding wetland mapping.

Harter distributed a proposed schedule for monthly two-hour meetings. The September 2020 meeting will be the group's presentation to the BOS. Next meeting is set for March 9, 2020 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 pm. Two workgroups to meet this month were identified as: 1.) Drainage: Murken, Wall, Moon. 2.) Outreach: Moore, Cox, Harter. Harter will update the matrix as needed. Group agreed that updating the matrix tabs on the S drive is a good approach for updating others.

Jaynes moved, seconded by Wall, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret C. Jaynes