

Watershed Assessment Group Minutes
Zoom
March 9, 2021

Present were Margaret Jaynes, Amelia Schoeneman, Linda Murken, Scott Wall, Leanne Harter, Darren Moon, Mike Cox, Matt Boeck, and Sandra King.

Harter called to order at 2:00 pm.

No learning moment.

Meeting notes from February 17th, link sent. Jaynes moved, Cox seconded to approve the minutes of previous meeting. Motion carried.

Old Business

A. Headwater WMA Update

Cox stated that the Board authorized RFPs for consulting services. Received a few questions from firms and issued an addendum to answer those questions. Proposals are due 3/19/21. Harter to collect proposals. The Technical Team meets March 26th to go over scores. WMA meets again on April 22nd. Some discussion occurred regarding proposal collections and timeframe for getting those to Cox, with more discussion to occur after the meeting.

New Business

A. Review Implementation Matrix. Cox will share screen, provide data on action steps, and identify order in which others provide updates so the matrix can be updated.

Cox explained the matrix and that each item has a staff lead (or multiple ones) for each responsible party.

Harter offered guidance regarding review of the matrix; everyone should consider the following:

- Is this still a viable strategy?
- If it's not, why not?
- Still a valuable strategy but needs to be revised.

Cox asked if Schoeneman had seen the matrix and provided an overview of the update process, framework, color codes, etc.

Updates will be added to the matrix as items are discussed.

Staff Updates:

Cox –

1.1 Storm Water Ordinance. Updated.

2.2 Riparian Area Action Plan. Haven't done anything on that. Schoeneman, who is also listed for P&D and will have this on her tab, noted review and update of land development regs which would fall under this category specifically the natural areas (i.e. prairies, groundwater capture zones, buffers, and similar areas). Will likely have updated regs to Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) by May and then to BOS. Relates to item c.

Schoeneman's more detailed explanation of updates: Doing an ordinance update through the whole code; creating new sensitive area requirements. For example, we'll have specific requirements if you have a prairie on your site or a groundwater capture zone...It's not specifically the Greenbelt Conservation District but it is reviewing land development regs for sensitive area requirements. Is that sort of what we're thinking here? It would include buffers from streams and that sort of thing for development.

Cox clarified what is meant by riparian and that the info fit in this area. Murken further noted this is related to item c, and asked if a and b were still viable. Cox confirmed it was and added the reason we haven't gotten there yet is because we didn't have a position to implement. Haven't done homework; don't know what we need to do regarding cost share, incentivizing, but would say edge of field (EOF) project we're looking at may fit here on some level. Cox advised Schoeneman what she just said for her update, should be entered into tab here under 2.2 for this project. Cox will update his section to note review of Polk County EOF practices.

Murken provided update on how Polk County is using its Watershed Coordinator role to assist landowners in using EOF practices. Exploring approach to determine feasibility for use in Story County.

2.3 Wetland Mitigation Bank. Responsible parties - Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Conservation Board. Dotson wetlands under item b; currently in conceptual design on that. Update provided at last meeting. Some potential exists for different levels of banking. Mike Heller, JEO, to do a "back of the napkin" review of sections of the Skunk River and follow up with Cox on banking potential. Banking, which takes upfront capital, can have a pretty good return as credits are sold. Can be a revenue generator.

2.4 Stream Mitigation Bank. Same update as above.

2.5 Protect Nature Prairie Remnants. Skipped.

2.6 Sensitive Environmental Areas. Dr. Rossberg is continuing to work on that and issued a very preliminary draft to us a couple of weeks ago. He will probably have it complete this spring. It will be an amazing document; prepare to receive 1000 pages of data. Once we have this, Schoeneman will need to chat about findings and how it relates to wetland resources and other zoning. Want to set up a group of private landowners that we can facilitate/educate/urge them to use natural resource practices on their property and protect natural resource areas. What's referred to as an assistance program (2.6a). Getting closer; have been working on this for many years.

2.7 Nutrient Reduction. The EOF project is here too. Fits in both places.

Harter asked why her and Schildroth's names were initially listed here. Cox noted BOS was listed here in case there was an incentive or cost sharing program. He added notes regarding use of the Polk County model.

2.9 Water Quality Monitoring. Dan has been actively presenting and conducting outreach to different groups (i.e. at our last meeting, BOS, City of Nevada, and other groups). Expectation is plan will be available at end of month.

2.12 Erosion Control/Stormwater Management. No progress. Another one that will show up on Schoeneman's tab.

2.13 Nutrient Reduction Outreach. No progress.

Jaynes:

2.1 Convene Water Quality Working Group. Done.

2.9 Water Quality Monitoring. Same as update as Cox. Jaynes questioned whether 15 sites throughout the County sufficient. Great start. Could add to it if we get the funding.

2.10 Municipal Outreach. This may be more of a planning thing. Harter agreed that Jaynes should highlight her initials for removal.

Cox to merge documents being updated to ensure one document with latest updates is available.

2.15 Feedlot Outreach. Haven't done much on this. Reached out to matrix folks recently regarding Upchurch winter application. Believe they are nearing violation their master matrix.

2.16 Source Water Protection. Did a summary of this and put on S: drive a while back, about a year ago. Could review to see if there are any changes; don't think there are any.

2.17 Water Management Practices. Some of these listed may be more appropriate for DNR. b. Provide additional resources for illicit discharge detection and elimination. Think new regulation passed in January would help identify those. Murken asked about cost of replacement. Costs range from \$8,000 to \$20,000 or so.

Cox noted that monitoring may aid in identifying problem spots. Consideration may also be given to providing incentives to get systems upgraded. Jaynes added that if there are older systems that have never been replaced, there is a good chance it is an open discharger. We have some data now. Pumping requirement may cause owners to replace them if the older systems collapse during pumping.

Jaynes confirmed that a and c under this item should be removed; will highlight for removal.

Wall: Technical difficulties. Update is needed for 2.8 – Draining District Operational Guidance.

Harter:

1.2 Floodplain Ordinance Modification. Change initials to AS and responsible party to Planning & Development.

Schoeneman inquired about incompatible uses in stream and lake buffers whether it was for floodplain or buffers identified in watershed study. Harter confirmed that it is referring to prohibiting incompatible uses within the floodplain. Schoeneman will share some proposed language with Harter.

2.7 Nutrient Reduction. Not sure why initials are there; highlight.

2.11 WMA Collaboration. Headwaters WMA work is underway. Revise where Square Creek is listed to change to Ioway.

2.14 Floodplain Management. Change responsible party to Planning & Development. Leave LH initials for outreach.

Schoeneman inquired about the type of conservation practices referred to (i.e. stormwater detention, retention, engineered wetlands, water quality monitoring stations...or just allowing prairie restoration). Harter noted it was considering use of the no adverse impact toolkit and approaches and building it into the ordinance. Will get some info to Schoeneman.

3.2 Story County Infrastructure. Last CIP round did not address this. Will look into this. Cox agreed and added this is a requirement on any County projects that would require any level of permitting it should be addressed, at least for stormwater. Schoeneman agreed.

Moon:

2.8 Draining District Operational Guidance. No committee or working group was set up but will let Wall update. Harter to follow up. Murken has notes regarding a meeting she attended with Wall and Moon and will review notes prior to next meeting and discuss with Wall.

3.1 Drainage Ditches – Whenever projects get to the point of hiring an engineer, they always review water quality practices as part of that. Beyond that, no plan is in place to look at all of them. Will look at them as they come up and as needed.

Schoeneman noted that the Planner starting mid April has a watershed management background.

Murken:

2.11 WMA Collaboration. Serves on Ioway Creek WMA. Goals have been identified for next year. Also looking at Hamilton County and info to landowners. Discussion of EOF and saturated buffers. Also trying to get more specific info from Polk County.

Schoeneman:

1.1 Stormwater Ordinance. Updated.

2.2 Riparian Area Action Plan. Talked about this during Cox's update. Hope to complete update of land use regulations regarding different types of natural areas (will include riparian areas) in May.

2.5 Protect Nature Prairie Remnants. Doing update of natural resources layer in C2C plan to include conservation priority survey sites and sensitive environmental areas identified in the watershed study. Once identified and new requirements in place (as discussed under 2.2), we will have better protective measures. It's not a rezoning but a C2C plan future land use map amendment. This is broken out on our work plan so this is tackled before a rezoning. Will work with Ethan if a mass rezoning is considered to ensure we're not running into a takings issue.

Cox agreed and cautioned the need to tread lightly and focus on volunteer and willingness vs. heavy hand requirements.

2.6 Sensitive Environmental Areas. Already touched on this.

2.10 Municipal Outreach. This is a work program item; low priority. Could consider bumping it up. Expect it to be a higher priority on the 2022 work program.

2.12 Erosion Control/Stormwater Management. Looking into whether we're allowed to include stormwater management, based on legislative actions.

2.14 Floodplain Management. Discussed this during Harter's update.

Other item to share – hired new planner who starts in mid-April. She has dual Master's degrees in Planning and Sustainable Agriculture. Her thesis at ISU focused on what makes watershed management organizations work well and has really researched them in Iowa. She's also done outreach on stormwater. She'll be an asset in outreach efforts and has done a lot of outreach to farmers.

Cox updated the group on the Watershed Coordinator position, shared his screen to show the draft work program he was working on, and invited the group to offer ideas on what the coordinator could assist with. He cautioned the group to be light out of the gate and not dump everything on him/her. Murken cautioned items for the list should be priority items, not just items the group does not have time to do. She added that the sooner we get the coordinator out working with landowners the better. She further noted to need to do some things as a county that

are consistent with our spheres and the need to focus on improving water quality by looking at what's going on with private land and how we can encourage landowners to follow best practices.

Harter suggested updating the Board of Supervisors on the Implementation Matrix in April. Cox suggested meeting again before presentation to the board (i.e. first week in May or around that timeframe).

Note Takers – Upcoming Meetings:

- Cox will take notes at April meeting.
- Harter will take notes at May meeting.
- Schoeneman volunteered to take notes.

VI. Staff Updates and Assignments

As indicated.

VII. Other Items Not on the Agenda

As indicated.

VIII. Next Meeting Time and Date

Harter proposed April 14th at 9:00 – 10:30 am via Zoom

IX. Adjournment

3:29 pm following a motion by Jaynes and a second by King

Respectfully submitted by Sandra King