

MINUTES
Chisago County Water Plan Policy Team
Monday, January 13, 2025

The Chisago County Water Plan Policy Team met for their bi-monthly meeting at 3:00 p.m. Monday, January 13, 2025, via an in-person meeting held at the Chisago County Government Center, Conference Room 150B in Center City, MN, and a virtual Meeting with the following Policy Team members present: Dan Dahlberg (County Commissioner), Victoria Deitschman (Public Health), David Kern (Citizen at Large), Robert Klatt (Citizen at Large), Craig Mell (Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District), Kurt Schneider (Environment Services), and Dawn White (Chair and Citizen at Large). **ABSENT:** none.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.02, Water Plan Policy Team member Victoria Deitschman will remotely attend the Policy Team meeting on Monday, January 13, 2025 at 3:00 pm via Microsoft Teams. Policy Team member Deitschman will be seen and heard via electronic means and will participate from 6133 402nd Street, North Branch, MN 55056. a location open and accessible to the public. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.02, Subd. 3, persons interested in monitoring the meeting electronically from a remote location may view the meeting through the Microsoft Teams meeting link.

Also present: Susanna Wilson Witkowski (Water Resource Manager), Madelyn Kinny (AIS Specialist), Ben Elfelt (Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District - LID), Monica Kinny (Water Resource Specialist - LID), Ashley Haviland and Keegan Lund (EutroPHIX), Abby Shea (Minnesota Department of Health, MDH), Casey Thiel (Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District), Doug O'Brien (Rush Lake Improvement Association), Greg Anklaan (Pioneer Lake Homeowners Association), and Mike Sandager and Matthew Hendrickson (Comfort Lake – Forest Lake Watershed District), and Miranda Nichols (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency).

Each Policy Team member, and others present, attended the meeting in person or at a location of their choice through a personal device (e.g. laptop, tablet, cell phone or personal computer). Each Policy Team member, and others present, could view documents presented during the virtual Meeting via their devices and to participate in discussion through microphones located in their devices.

The Chair, Dawn White, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Team members and visitors were introduced.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Klatt offered a motion to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, Chisago County Water Plan Policy Team meeting. Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team Member Mell and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** none.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Mell offered a motion to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team member Klatt and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion carries as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** none.

Citizen At-Large Term Expirations

Wilson Witkowski provided an update to the Policy Team that the Citizen At-Large members John Eret and Scott Noland are not seeking re-appointment. There are currently two Citizen At-Large Policy Team positions available.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Mell offered a motion to appoint member White as chair and Klatt as vice-chair of the Water Plan Policy Team. Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team Member Kern and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** none.

Policy Team member Klatt suggested staggering the Citizen At-Large terms to avoid a gap in applications when members do not seek re-appointment. The Policy Team discussed staggering the terms and bringing the topic to the Chisago County Board of Commissioners for review and discussion.

Washington County Presentation

Ashlee Haviland with EutroPHIX and Doug O'Brien with the Rush Lake Improvement District provided a presentation on the restoration project and treatment completed in 2024 to address phosphorus pollution in West Rush Lake. The Policy Team discussed completing a letter of support addressed to the U.S. House of Representatives Pete Stauber for the Rush Lake Improvement Association's request for federal funding to address phosphorus pollution in West Rush Lake that leads to persistent harmful algal blooms.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Schneider offered a motion to authorizing a letter of support to the U.S. House of Representatives Pete Stauber for Rush Lake Improvement Association's request for Congress to address phosphorus pollution in West Rush Lake that leads to persistent harmful algal blooms. Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team Member Dahlberg and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion **carried** as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** none.

Wellhead Protection

Wilson Witkowski and Abby Shea with MDH provided an update on the upcoming City of Stacy Wellhead Protection Program update.

Lower St. Croix, Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Wilson Witkowski provided an update on the Policy Committee Citizen At-Large representative and Alternate appointments. Policy Team member Mell provided an update on the FY 21 and 25 grant budgets.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Updates

a. Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Treatment and Education Grants

Wilson Witkowski reviewed with the Policy Team the ARPA AIS grant applications for 2025 submitted by five of the seven lake associations in Chisago County that were approved by the Chisago County Board of Commissioners at their meeting on December 4, 2024.

b. AIS Signage

Madelyn Kinny provided an update on the AIS signage purchased through ARPA funds including the sign design and schedule for installation in 2025.

c. Lake Management Planning

Wilson Witkowski reviewed with the Policy Team the efforts since 2023 to work with lake associations in the county to find their planning needs for lakes in their associations and the timeline for EOR to complete Tasks 1 – 4 that are identified in the planning scope for assessment and monitoring for a countywide strategic lake management plan. These tasks include holding a special meeting in February to complete the stakeholder input session for Task 1 of the planning scope. The Policy Team discussed scheduling a Team meeting on February 10, 2025 for the stakeholder input session, and holding the regular March Policy Team meeting on March 24, 2025.

AIS Plans

Wilson Witkowski reviewed with the Policy Team on developing an AIS Rapid Response and Management Plan and updating the Outreach and Communication Plan in 2025.

Invasive Phragmites Summary

Wilson Witkowski and Elfelt provided an update on Invasive Phragmites monitoring in 2024 in Fish Lake and Nessel Townships and within the Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District. Wild Rivers Conservancy staff and volunteers found a total of thirteen new invasive phragmites, twenty-six native phragmites, and 106 purple loosestrife populations. The county Invasive Phragmites Planning Committee will continue to identify, map, and treat invasive phragmites populations within the county in 2025.

AIS Program Updates

Wilson Witkowski reviewed with the Policy Team the Horseshoe and Fish Lakes plant survey and web mapping results.

Madelyn Kinny provided an update on the following agenda items:

- a. Starry Stonewort webinar on January 16, 2025, and
- b. AIS Management 101 on February 3, 2025.

Elfelt reviewed with the Policy Team the Green and Little Green Lakes plant survey results.

We Are Water MN Exhibit

Wilson Witkowski provided an update on reconvening the Planning Work Group and continuing the We Are Water MN theme ideas and events in 2025 and in future years.

Workshops/Conferences

Wilson Witkowski provided an update on the upcoming Minnesota Lake Management Symposium on February 4, 2025.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Mell offered a motion to fund up to 3 Citizen at Large members of the Policy Team to attend the Minnesota Lake Management Society Symposium on February 4, 2025 (\$70 per person registration totaling \$210). Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team member White and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion carries as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** none.

2025 Activities

Wilson Witkowski provided an update on the 2025 planned activities. This includes:

- a. American Recovery Plan Act – AIS Grants, Signage and Lake Management Planning
- b. AIS Prevention – Management, Education, and Response Plans
- c. Children’s Water Festival (September 25, 2025)
- d. Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District Program Coordination
- e. Lower St. Croix - Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan
- f. Water Plan Policy Team Coordination
- g. Water Quality Monitoring
- h. We Are Water MN – Chisago County

Agency Updates

Policy Team Member Mell provided an update on two Accelerated Implementation (AIG) Clean Water Fund grants that the Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District received for implementation in 2025. The first is a phosphorus source assessment management plan for a property near West Rush Lake. The second is an internal phosphorus load analysis for lakes within Chisago County to determine a ranking assessment and recommendations for future phosphorus treatment for each lake.

The next meeting of the Chisago County Water Plan Policy Team is scheduled for Monday, February 10, 2025, at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be hybrid in-person and virtual.

Water Plan Policy Team Member Schneider offered a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:42 p.m. Motion seconded by Water Plan Policy Team Member Mell and, upon a vote being taken thereon, the motion carried as follows: **IN FAVOR THEREOF:** Dahlberg, Deitschman, Eret, Kern, Klatt, Mell, Schneider, and White. **OPPOSED:** none. **ABSENT:** Noland.