

Mississippi Headwaters Board
March 19th, 2010
Cass County Courthouse, Walker, MN
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Lyle Robinson (Hubbard County), Dean Newland (Clearwater), Jack Frost (Beltrami County), Lori Dowling (Itasca), Tom Wenzel (Morrison), Paul Thiede (Crow Wing); and Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.)

Members Excused: Brian Napstad (Aitkin County) and Dick Downham (Cass)

Others Present:

Bill Patnaude – Beltrami County ESO (and TAC Chair)

9:02 am – Chair Jack Frost (Beltrami) called to order the monthly meeting of the Mississippi Headwaters Board at 9:02 am on March 19th, 2010, at the Cass County Courthouse, Walker, MN. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance.

9:03 am - Agenda (March 19th '10). **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Jack Frost (Beltrami) / Lori Dowling (Itasca) to approve the Agenda - 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

9:04 am - Meeting Minutes (Feb. '10). **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Paul Thiede (Crow Wing) / Lori Dowling (Itasca) to approve the Feb. '10 Minutes - 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

9:05 am – Expense Report (Feb. '10). Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) made special note of the entries for the Northern Minnesota Regional Science Fair Awards and the payment to Minnesota Power for \$1,607.10. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Tom Wenzel (Morrison) / Lyle Robinson (Hubbard) to approve the Expense Report for Feb. '10 – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

9:06 am – Zoning Actions – none

9:06 am – Staff Report (March '10). Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) highlighted several items:

- **#2/3 (P/B)** – '10 appropriations were received from both Morrison and Clearwater County
- **#4 (P/C)** – Acknowledgement letter to Crow Wing County re: proposed ordinance amendments sent 3/10/10
- **#5 (P/C)** – Received an invitation 3/4/10 to attend upcoming meetings (3/10 and 3/24) held by Aitkin County P/Z re: ordinance updates
- **#8 (P/C)** – Received notice from the City of Grand Rapids of plans to update their Comprehensive Plan. They also asked this board to appoint someone to sit on their Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Lori Dowling (Itasca) volunteered to be appointed on behalf of the MHB. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Tom Wenzel (Morrison) / Paul Thiede (Crow Wing) to have staff notify Grand Rapids that Lori Dowling has volunteered – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.
- **#9 (P/B)** – Sent a letter on 3/10/10 to Minnesota Power (Cc to Tom Wenzel, Helen McLennan – Morrison County SWCD and FERC) regarding the MHB's plan to reconcile the River Watch account and return any unused balance to Minnesota Power
- **#10 (P/B)** – Office received a CD from Cass County on 3/15/10 detailing recent Land Use and Subdivision Ordinance revisions as well as a copy of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Staff asked the board how to handle future notices of this nature. The board advised that staff should simply notify the board members via email and provide a direct link to the documents from the County site so that they can view them independently and comment back if deemed nec.

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10:15 am – Action Items –

► **River Watch meeting** – Bill Patnaude (TAC Chair) provided a Memorandum of the River Watch meeting held 3/15/10 in Bemidji. An attendee list was also given to the Commissioner for their review. Bill continued with a brief synopsis of the meeting. Below are some highlights of discussion from the March 15th meeting as well as today's review of the topic:

- 1) 25 invitations went out – 18 total attended the Bemidji RW meeting (3/15/10)
- 2) The past MHB River Watch Program mimicked one originated in Vermont
- 3) A Blandin Foundation grant of approx. \$500k was obtained by the MHB to develop the River Watch program. Another grant of nearly the same amount, extended the program for an addition 3yrs
- 4) In '05 MHB staff sent out approx. 57 letters to past schools/organizations involved with MHB River Watch program. Only 4 responses came back with interest to participate in the future
- 5) The MHB should approach a new water monitoring program as professional and certifiable and market involvement to all 'School Districts' w/in the Upper Mississippi corridor not just individual schools. Board can consider modeling it after FEAP (Timber Program) and may want to invite FEAP to a future meeting to discuss
- 6) Allot a small portion of MHB funds as 'seed money'/incentive to add a water monitoring program to school curriculum
- 7) Reach out to other interested organization as well (i.e. lake associations, boy scout, non-profits etc.)
- 8) Extend program to include the 'Mississippi River Watershed Basin'. Re-name program to 'Mississippi Headwaters River Water Program' and ensure program is designed to obtain useful/tangible results
- 9) Possibly look to expand the MHB to include 3 more counties. Wadena, Carlton and Becker are neighboring counties w/in the basin
- 10) A single entity must do program coordination. The board feels that the MHB is in the best position for this but may need to hiring/contract w/a person with biology/environmental science background or find a volunteer w/same credentials for that position
- 11) Coordinator would have: a) over-site of program training for adherence to MPCA testing protocols; b) provide marketing and collaboration w/other existing monitoring groups (lake/tributaries/cities/tribal etc.); c) identify partners and financial resources; and d) Possibly expand job responsibilities to include 8 county collaboration on Comprehensive Water Management Plans
- 12) Make monitoring data available on-line (WEB site). Expand on current MHB WEB site to include real-time data retrieval of Mississippi Headwaters monitoring results
- 13) Headwater Science Center may open a certified lab and have office space available for a Mississippi Headwaters Water Monitoring Coordinator
- 15) Itasca County SWCD have personnel that maybe able to provide grant writing assistance for the board
- 16) Next move: pull together a meeting (w/TAC and SWCD) to determine possible target area, and identify where the certified labs are located through out corridor
- 17) MHB should develop 3 main Mississippi Headwaters River Watch objectives and add topic to the next Strategic Planning Session Agenda

► **Strategic Planning Session (SPS)** - Through discussion the following was determined:

- Purpose for second meeting is to identify specific objectives to develop the framework for the Work Plan
- The Initiative Foundation (IF) grant period ends March 31st, the board than has another 30 days to submit final reports (budget worksheet and goals accomplished) per the grant guidelines*
- Date for the second SPS – April 23rd – registration from 9:30 –10:00 am (lunch will be provided)
- Regular scheduled MHB monthly meeting will still be held April 16th

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- Facility is yet to be determined but staff will provide SPS Subcommittee with 4 bids
- **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Lyle Robinson (Hubbard) / Tom Wenzel (Morrison) to assign the SPS Subcommittee as follows: Chair, Vice Chair, Commissioner Napstad and staff and to grant the committee the ability to move on decisions – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.
- Subcommittee will: draft an agenda and attendee list, book facility, and mail invitation by 4/6/10
- Chair Jack Frost (Beltrami) co/facilitate the meeting w/Vice Chair Lori Dowling (Itasca) and will consult w/Michael Goldberg (Action Media) on meeting lay-out etc if necessary
- Vice Chair Dowling (Itasca) suggested 3 break-out sessions and asked for the Commissioners to volunteer to sit in on one of them at the meeting. Here are the break-outs and volunteers:
 - 1) Water Monitoring (Beltrami/Clearwater)
 - a. Promote program; partnership coordination
 - b. FEAP Model
 - c. Potential Coordinator position
 - 2) Working Water (Promoting) - citizen/shareholder involvement (Crow Wing/Morrison)
 - a. Guide book
 - b. Tourism / Chamber collaboration
 - 3) Governance – Long Range Planning and funding (Hubbard/Aitkin)
 - a. Citizen Advisory Committee direction
 - b. Cooperation between water groups
 - c. Staffing

The board made additional suggestions on who to invite. The following is a partial list to consider: Chambers, City Administrators/Managers, Lake Associations, Leg. Reps., attendees from 3/15/10 RW meeting, MHAC, TAC, Itasca State Park, Lake Country Journal and Pete Card III. Invitations can also suggest an alternate be sent but to affirm attendance w/a response

*Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) asked the board for their comments on the draft letter composed just before the meeting as a direct result of discussion from the February meeting. The letter is addressed to Don Hickman (Initiative Foundation) as an update on SPS progress. The board offered a few recommendations for changes to the letter and will review in further detail after this meeting and report any additional corrections back to Pam by the end of the month

Side bar discussion – In the process of developing an attendee list, the board was provided the names of those who sit on the Mississippi Headwaters Advisory Committee (MHAC). Once this board has had the 4/23 SPS meeting and has clear objectives identified, staff can mail out a letter to each past MHAC member, asking about their continued interest to be involved. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Lori Dowling (Itasca) / Tom Wenzel (Morrison) to have staff draft a thank you letter to the past MHAC and advise of a restructuring. Commissioner Paul Thiede (Crow Wing) amended the motion to remove mention of restructuring – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried

► **Guide Book** – Paul Thiede (Crow Wing) provided some detail on his recent conversations with Chip Borkenhagen (Lake Country Journal publisher). Chip expressed the desire to collaborate w/the MHB on a second addition and felt confident that the current book could be duplicated for re-print if old files of the original could not be found. It was also noted that a list of past collaborators were listed in the back of the book and may provide the board w/names of those to approach again to assist w/re-print costs. Staff will continue to pull any information on the original grant for book publication (dollars and copy count) and may also need to look into any possible copy right issues. Some board members offered other suggestions on how to revise/update the first version: re-launch in collaboration w/a special upcoming event or celebration, add a pull out River guide map, add Geocaching clues in the book and on-line for environments/archeological scavenger hunts that relate to the river etc.

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Pam provided brief details and an on-line example of her recent work on the WEB site. She has been working to modify the current MHB WEB site and River Watch page to allow for data entry of monitoring readings and archive data retrieval.

► **Staff Responsibility** – This Agenda item was to coincide with earlier discussion on the probability of increased River Watch program activity and the likelihood of contracting a River Watch Coordinator. Pam Kicher (Admin. Asst.) offered the Commissioners a copy of the job descriptions of the past Director, Office Manager, RW Coordinator, and the part-time Admin. Asst. The board asked to table this discussion till next month

There was no further business of the Mississippi Headwaters Board to discuss, **motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Lori Dowling (Itasca) / Dea n Newland (Clearwater) to adjourn the meeting at 11:57 am - 5 ayes, 0 nays, Motion carried

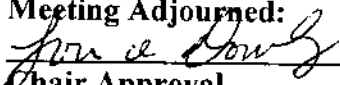
11:17 am – Misc –

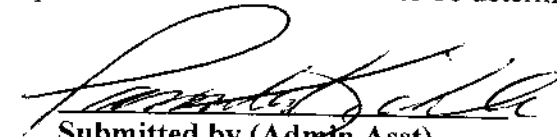
☼ **Legislature Update** – None

☼ **County Updates** – None

Next MHB meeting: Friday, April 16th, 2011, at 9 am – Cass County Courthouse, Walker, MN
Next SPS (Strategic Planning Session – Part II), April 23rd at 10 am – location to be determined

Meeting Adjourned:


Chair Approval


Submitted by (Admin Asst)