

**Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**Tuesday, May 26, 2009- 1:30 PM**  
**Benton County Commissioner Board Room - Foley, MN 56329**

The Benton County Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Duane Cekalla at 1:30 p.m. at the Benton County Commissioner Board Room on Tuesday, May 26, 2009.

Those in attendance include: Duane Cekalla – Little Rock Lake Association, Ken Nodo - At-large, Annie Felix – Benton SWCD and Water Plan Coordinator, Dan Martens – U of M Extension, Craig Gondeck – At-Large, Guy Spence – At-Large, Gerry Maciej – Benton SWCD, John Henz – City of Sauk Rapids, Chelle Benson – Benton County DOD, Phil Votruba – MPCA, Chuck Rau – Benton SWCD, Jim Moshier – Municipalities Rep, Mark McNamara – Benton County Dept. Development.

(Three Priority Issues in Comprehensive Water Plan: 1) Groundwater quantity and quality, 2) Development, 3) Feedlots and Nutrient Management.)

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

2. Review / Approve Minutes. Motion by Craig to approve the March 24, 2009 minutes. Second by Ken Nodo. Motion Carried.

**3. Agenda.** Motion by Ken Nodo to approve the agenda. Second by Craig Gondek. Annie Felix requested adding an item for information from Elk River Watershed Association. Motion Carried with amended item.

**4. Reports**

Annie:

a. Little Rock Lake Association Picnic, Rumors Bar, 11:00, June 27.

b. Little Rock Lake Shoreline Buffer Workshop. A May 2 introductory event was held. A follow-up event for doing a planting at the site will be held on June 13.

c. Shoreland Buffer Maintenance, Sherburne County event, July 8.

d. Little Rock Creek and Lake TMDL projects update. The creek project has a due date of June 30 and an extension has been requested to September 30, 2009.

Consultant Bill Walker is still working on modeling project for the lake and may be finished by the end of June. This will be shared with the public toward late summer. A newsletter will likely follow a public meeting. It will cost about \$1600 to put together and send. Rice Sportsmen Club will be contacted for sponsorship.

e. Shallow Lakes Forum and MN Waters Conference

Annie has notes that she would be willing to share. A presenter talked about a process used on a few shallow lakes to drain them to re-establish desired lake bottom vegetation. Duane Cekalla shared that problems on lake started with flooding after the winter of 1965.

Annie attended several discussions about climate change at the Minnesota Waters Conference. Chisago County has conducted a pharmaceutical take-back program conducted for about \$5000 per year.

f. Membership. Annie passed out an updated list.

g. Mississippi River Renaissance Project. This is an effort to partner with all decision makers along this portion of the Mississippi River. A meeting was held recently to develop potential pieces for a mission statement. National Park Service is looking at concerns around the Mississippi River.

h. Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Coalition, Friday June 19, 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.

There is also a citizens and business group also looking at opportunities to make the best of Mississippi River assets.

People have different ideas and different agendas.

i. "Take a Day Off on the Mississippi River" event Saturday August 8 at the Stearns County Mississippi River Park.

j. The Elk River Watershed Annual Report was assembled by Tiffany Determan. Gerry Maciej offered comments on the report. An MPCA 319 grant closes in August of 2010. TMDL work in Elk River Watershed was initiated in 2008 in Benton and Sherburne County. Nutrient Management Test Plots indicated that there was not much of a yield response by over-applying or under-applying nutrients in 2008. Mike Fitzpatrick is working on a wetlands project. There will be a rain garden project in Foley this summer. Tiffany Determan was hired as the Elk River Watershed Coordinator.

k. 2008 SWCD Report was mailed to the committee. Gerry Maciej shared comments. 2008 was a good year for getting projects on the ground.

#### **5. Feedlot Delegation Follow-up.**

Annie would like to have a meeting with commissioners at a committee of the whole meeting. Duane Cekalla said as a former commissioner, he thinks this is a better approach. Duane Cekalla read a draft of a letter out loud.

It was also acknowledged that the commissioners are likely to be facing serious budget challenges for the next couple years and this might not be a favorable time to press for this.

#### **6. Sub-Committee Work time**

Questions were asked about Foley's work on Waste Water Treatment capacity and East St. Cloud needs for access to waste water treatment and municipal water sources.

Foley Waste Water Strategies. One option is to build a plant with Milaca, Foley, and Gilman. Another option is to take it to St. Cloud. Foley is in the original 25 mile radius service area proposed the "regional" treatment facility at St. Cloud. It is nine miles to tie into the closest point now. That might cost \$4.5 million compared to \$12 million to build a new plant. Milaca would consider going to St. Cloud also. Geese create an Ecoli problem in treatment ponds.

East St. Cloud business access to St. Cloud Waste Water Treatment. There are needs and it would be preferred not to build on site treatment systems now and have to spend more to close them later when St. Cloud is more willing to provide connections. This was funded as a "regional" treatment resource.

Foley continues to work on a new source of well water. One test well, at a depth of 107 feet, seems to test well so far.

Foley has a contaminated well that they are hoping to get assistance in dealing with.

The committee split into two groups to talk about 2 priority concerns:

- 1) Development
- 2) Groundwater

**Sub-Committee Work Reports on Action Items:**

1) Development group considered:

- a. Incorporate water resource education into a county-wide newsletter
- b. Contact agencies (DNR, County Parks, Extension Service, others) to identify and compile list of existing inventories of rare/critical/vulnerable water resources
- c. Create sensitive areas management plan using the resources concern areas and priorities developed in d) and list compiled in b)

Timing is not good economically for the newsletter idea. Group advised Annie to pursue item b – identify and compile a list of existing inventories from agencies.

Another item of discussion was a County ordinance requiring septic systems on waterfronts to bring septic systems up to code. If not brought up to code within a stated time they could be brought up to code and cost assessed on the property.

b. considered it feasible to do an inventory, go ahead with implementing

2) Groundwater considered:

- a. Establishing a groundwater data base.

Learn what existing agencies are doing and how existing resources can be used for local information needs. Determine whether there are further needs and whether existing resources can be adapted to meet needs before creating new layers of work and resources.

**7. Next meeting:**

July 28, 2009 1:30 at the Benton County Commissioner’s room.

Geologic Atlas Update might be useful. If Geologic Atlas staff present at this meeting, it might be useful to ask them for a live online demonstration with discussion related to the Sub-Committee topic on using water resource data bases.

**8. Adjournment. Motion by Chuck Rau to adjourn. Second by Craig Gondek. Motion Carried.**

Adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dan Martens, Secretary

Approved by:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

WRAC Board Chairperson